

THE  
ERRANT DIPLOMAT



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# THE ERRANT DIPLOMAT

*The Life of Franz von Papen*

By  
OSWALD DUTCH

*With an Introduction by*  
CAPTAIN VON RINTELEN



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*Works by Oswald Dutch*

THUS DIED AUSTRIA  
GERMANY'S NEXT AIMS  
HITLER'S TWELVE APOSTLES

*London : Edward Arnold & Co.*

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION. BY CAPTAIN VON RINTELEN . . .	11
THE STRANGE TOOLS OF WORLD HISTORY . . .	15
<div style="padding-left: 40px;">Portrait of an Adventurer. Papen the Gravedigger.</div> <div style="padding-left: 40px;">‘Erbsälzer von Werl und Neuwerk.’ The Boch-Galhau Family. </div>	
<div style="margin: 0 auto; width: 100px;">FIRST PART</div>	
<div style="margin: 0 auto; width: 150px;">THE HEROIC PERIOD</div>	
CHAPTER	
1. MILITARY ATTACHÉ IN WASHINGTON AND MEXICO . . .	31
<div style="padding-left: 40px;">The Post of Military Attaché. The Outbreak of the World War. </div>	
2. SABOTAGE . . . . .	40
<div style="padding-left: 40px;">After the Mexican Example. Captain von Rintelen. Bogus Passports. </div>	
3. SHEER CARELESSNESS . . . . .	59
<div style="padding-left: 40px;">Lost Dispatch-Cases. ‘These Idiotic Yankees.’ ‘Persona non grata.’ Falmouth. 196 Counterfoils. Valuations. </div>	
4. ‘THE CLOWN OF THREE CONTINENTS’ . . . . .	70
<div style="padding-left: 40px;">Battles on the Western Front. Army Group ‘Yildirim’. Herr von Papen is bored. Flight in Pyjamas. </div>	
5. THE BILL IS PRESENTED . . . . .	80
<div style="padding-left: 40px;">American Claims. </div>	

## SECOND PART

### CHANCELLOR OF THE GERMAN REICH

6. THE UNKNOWN POLITICIAN . . . . .	85
<div style="padding-left: 40px;">Twelve Years’ Holiday. The ‘Herrenklub’. A Dream: Ambassador to Luxemburg. Newspaper Magnate. Dr. Brüning’s Antithesis. Papen’s Articles in <i>Der Ring</i>. Papen’s ‘Confession of Faith’. </div>	

## CHAPTER

PAGE

## 7. THE POLICY OF THE UNKNOWN

104

Power Factors in the Reich. Hindenburg. The Reichswehr. Schleicher. N.S.D.A.P. The Social Democrats. Hugenberg. The Remaining Power Factors. Outsiders : The Communists. Germany's Burdens. The World Economic Crisis. Brüning's Fall.

## 8. PAPEN TAKES OVER THE GOVERNMENT

125

Hitler promises Support. Papen's Broken Word. The Lausanne Conference. The Destruction of the Weimar Republic. The Capitulation of Social Democracy. The Reichstag Elections, 31st July 1932.

## 9. HITLER VERSUS PAPEN

139

The Führer breaks his Word. Murder at Potempa. Hindenburg rejects Hitler. A Clash : Goering versus Papen.

## 10. SCHLEICHER DISLODGES PAPEN

151

The National Socialists court the Workers. Hitler loses Ground. Papen's First Resignation. Stabbed by Schleicher. The Papen Government summed up.

## THIRD PART

## HITLER'S LACKEY

## 11. THE COLOGNE AGREEMENT

163

Gregor Strasser, Vice-Chancellor Designate. Papen backs Hitler. Schleicher prepares a Riposte. Intrigue by Papen.

## 12. THE HITLER-PAPEN GOVERNMENT

175

Wish-fulfilment Dreams. Goering Rules. In Defence of Hindenburg. Surprise in Rome. Papen makes Speeches.

## 13. PAPEN'S MARBURG SPEECH

187

The Vice-Chancellor's Circle. Hitler in Difficulties. Hindenburg's Successor? Papen's Speech. Eulogy of Hitler. Against Goebbels. Against the Mechanisation of Life. Against a Religious Conflict. Against Rosenberg. Against the Sovereignty of one Party. Lack of Intellect confers no Title for Fighting Intellectualism. Against Goering. The Danger of a New Revolution. Mistakes of Wrong Propaganda.

## CHAPTER

## PAGE

## 14. PAPEN'S DELIVERY FROM THE GESTAPO . . . . . 210

Dr. Goebbels' Rage. Hindenburg's Congratulatory Telegram. To help Papen means Death . . . but Papen Escapes. Sanctuary with the Reichswehr and Hindenburg. Papen announces his Resignation. Papen's Activities as Vice-Chancellor.

## 15. ENVOY TO AUSTRIA . . . . . 224

Abortive Nazi Putsch in Austria. Papen is Unwelcome. Hindenburg's Last Letter. Papen makes Empty Promises. Papen at Work. The 'National Betonten'. The Reconstruction of the 'Illegals'. Hitler's Promises of 11th July 1936.

## 16. A PLOT FOR PAPEN'S ASSASSINATION . . . . . 239

Interim Conspiracies. A Centre for Treachery and Treason. Papen advances to the Attack. The Construction of Terrorist Organisations. The R. H. Plan . . . and the Tavs Conspiracy. The End of Baron von Ketteler. Papen is recalled.

## 17. PAPEN BETRAYS SCHUSCHNIGG . . . . . 255

'Hitler's Special Commissioner for the Surrender of Austria.' Schuschnigg's Fate. Thousands Dead, Tens of Thousands Arrested. Papen's 'Success'.

## 18. TREATY WITH THE SOVIET UNION . . . . . 263

Hitler beams on Papen. Ambassador at Ankara. Papen's Secret Negotiations for the Russian Pact. Papen acts for and against Russia. Turkey demands Papen's Recall.

## CONCLUSION : LACKEY OR GRAVEDIGGER ? . . . . . 280

## INDEX . . . . . 283

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
Franz von Papen . . . . .	18
Two of the cheques and counterfoils found in Papen's luggage in January 1916 . . . . .	66
General von Schleicher and his wife . . . . .	108
Papen's cabinet, 4th June 1932 . . . . .	126
Papen, with his wife and daughters, going to the poll on 6th November 1932 . . . . .	154
The Hitler-Papen cabinet, 31st January 1933 . . . . .	176
Dr. Erich Klausener . . . . .	190
Papen leaving for Vienna as Envoy, 15th August 1934 . . . . .	230
Papen and Glaise-Horstenau in Vienna, July 1936 . . . . .	238
Papen makes a joke . . . . .	244
Papen, with his attachés, on his way to an interview with Hitler, 21st February 1938 . . . . .	258
Papen sees Ribbentrop off to Moscow, 23rd August 1939 . . . . .	272



## INTRODUCTION

by

CAPTAIN VON RINTELEN

*London, 20th January 1940.*

May I present to you Oswald Dutch.

He is, in a way, my understudy. For, some time this winter I was approached by a London firm of publishers to write a book—the word ‘biography’ would be rather out of place—on that peculiar specimen of a human being, von Papen.

Many a reason spoke in favour of my accepting the task thus to be entrusted to me. One reason, however, spoke against it, and that was and is that the British mind is as critical as it is sceptical. It would not have accepted my ‘story’ as being unbiassed.

My own writings are all too clear. My first and second books, beginning with *The Dark Invader* (of America), which saw daylight seven years ago to-day, on 20th January 1933, are giving an eloquent description of the character of that most sinister type of a political adventurer, the war-time Military Attaché in the United States, Hauptmann von Papen.

So I decided to leave it, for better or worse, to other hands to write such a book, and his publishers made, in my opinion, no mistake by inviting Oswald Dutch to give us some insight into the deeds and misdeeds of the ‘hero’ of the present book. I myself saw the finished product only, had not wished to participate in the making of it, and except for a few corrections and suggestions concerning the chapter ‘America’, for which I was considered to be ‘the’ expert, the book

as it is before us to-day represents to me just as true a picture of the checkered career of the 'Uhlan-adventurer', as he is being called elsewhere, as it must be a revelation to British readers that it should have become possible that such 'types' are at work for the purpose of Europe's destruction.

The words 'if I had' serve no useful purpose in life. But one comes to think what a different course the history of the world might have taken had I given a free hand, or rather free hands, to my faithful ship-captains in New York, in 1915, whose disgust over the never-honest, ever-sneering Military Attaché knew no bounds. Not once, no—half a dozen times, they implored me to be allowed to give him for some new act of treachery committed either against them, or me as their C.-in-C., or against us all, a sound and hearty beating-up, to thrash him so that no doctor on earth could have certified to anything like an accidental mishap; the scars and marks left would have testified otherwise. But what is more, and more important: the ungallant Hauptmann could not have presented himself later on to the High Command in Berlin without giving an explanation how he came to possess such 'battle-scars' and, under the code of those, of civilised times in the German Army, he would have been obliged to retire with disrepute. And not even an Oskar von Hindenburg, the next to all-mighty son and permanent aide-de-camp of the aged Field-Marshal—a *real* Field-Marshal, as against the Bürgerbräu or Massage-Bureau ones of 'our' times—would have dared to present our hero to his father as heir-presumptive to Reich-Chancellor Brüning.

All that is: 'if'!

The great tragedy, the greatest of all in our living memory, is the reality.

May be that, somehow or other, Hitler would have come to power, Hitler whose close resemblance in thought and

outlook to Stalin I pointed out—alas ! in vain—for seven years, both in this Country and on the Continent.

But ‘ may be ’ only.

It required the wish of destiny, into which we vainly search, that almost all of a sudden, during that winter 1931 to 1932, the venerated Reich-President von Hindenburg, just beyond the age of 85, began to become deteriorated in mind, or—to employ a slang expression—to get ‘ gaga ’, a fate and misfortune that can and may befall any of us. Only, Heaven forbid that in this Country or in France, any ruling personage attaining such an age should not find, among his entourage or friends, a person sensible enough to advise, somehow, a retirement or removal.

It is the root of the whole present evil, it will prove the cause of the unavoidable repeated downfall of the German nation, that an unscrupulous group, a handful of men without conscience and sense of responsibility banked—ever since they, as the first ones, recognised it immediately, and many a more distant bystander gradually—on this frightful decay in the mental power of the fine old gentleman von Hindenburg. The results were obvious : these two men—for it was at first only the President’s son, Colonel Oskar von Hindenburg, and the permanent private secretary of the Reich-Chancellery, Dr. Meissner, who were able to realise and diagnose the impending disaster—now took advantage to the full of its consequences. They imputed to the ‘ Old Man ’ all kinds of notions and ideas, such as that Chancellor Brüning, whom they both hated and feared as the one who might dispossess them, was—‘ bolshevising ’ Germany. The reaction was prompt : in a fit of senile rage Hindenburg dismissed Brüning.

Who else but young Hindenburg’s class-mate Papen, a member of the then powerful Centre Party, could be acceptable to the ex-soldier Hindenburg ? ‘ What ? A former officer in the Army ? Send for him ! ’ he thundered.



No sooner was Papen appointed Chancellor—and more or less by those two, Hindenburg junior and Meissner—than the evil Trio snatched some blank signatures from the wavering hand of the old President Hindenburg, and now they had plain sailing : the ever-nervous Papen scribbled over these signatures whatever suited the sinister purposes of the Trio. The rest and the result is history of our time.

One powerful man, however, had to be taken into consideration : General von Schleicher. The Trio offered him the post of War Minister. But when Schleicher saw where the ship of State was drifting to, with those three ever-quarrelling ‘pilots’ at the helm, he took power himself, without counting on the possibility that our ‘Trio’, in their measureless lust for revenge, could go so far as to hatch one of the most dastardly plots of modern times : they took their common enemy Hitler on board !

Schleicher was ousted and then persecuted.

*De mortuis nil nisi bene*, especially if the *mortuus* has been murdered.

All that is described in detail in the present book.

One thing Papen did *not* intend, namely, to do something good. Whoever else came in touch with him perished, by treachery, by murder, by enforced suicide. His *first* victim was the young naval officer, Captain von Rintelen, sent by and from Berlin to America in 1915, and whom Papen played, out of jealousy, of fear, of hatred, of spite—the devil alone can look through his own creatures, of which Papen is one—into the hands of the enemy.

A dastardly act.

However, Fate is at times very kind : it provided, in the long run, that young naval officer with a new and civilised homeland : the ‘Dark Invader’ lives for good and ever in England !

VON RINTELEN.

# THE ERRANT DIPLOMAT

## *The Strange Tools of World History*

To write the life history of Franz von Papen is to recall the history of a quarter of a century in the person of a single man.

For, whether deliberately or by inadvertence, he has more than once decisively interrupted the course of world events.

To a considerable extent it was as a result of his activities at the beginning of the war of 1914-18 that the United States of America allied itself with the Entente.

He dug the grave of the Weimar Republic.

He helped Hitler and National Socialism to power in Germany.

He slipped Austria into Hitler's hands.

He was one of the originators of the agreement between National Socialism and the Soviet Union, and so indirectly was a primary cause of the outbreak of the new war in 1939.

Hundreds of people, and among them his best and truest friends, have had to forfeit life or freedom because of their connection with him.

Sufficient achievement, surely, for one man.

World history often employs strange tools. Men and women of less than average capacity are from time to time able to set in motion mighty developments. If such people make history it may outwardly appear to be chance; viewed from within it is for the most part ambition, and often crime, that drives individuals to reach out beyond their allotted limitations. The result is then mostly confusion, destruction or disaster.

Franz von Papen is one of these people. The comparison which suggests itself most readily is with Fouché, Napoleon's tool. Fouché, like Papen, sought a personal success through his personal ambition, his passion for adventure and his love of intrigue. Success was denied him as it has been to Papen. But the consequences of their activities have been far-reaching, historic, fateful.

Figures such as these can only play a part in epochs of historic upheaval. The French Revolution with the succeeding Napoleonic War was one of these epochs. The World War of 1914-18 with the following Economic War of 1919-39, and the outbreak, in the autumn of 1939, of a new armed conflict, must come in the same category. Life in such times of eruption may be interesting, hazardous, nerve-wracking. It is not pleasant—as little perhaps as the discovery that one's homestead is set on a Vesuvius or an Etna. At least, it is not pleasant for those who love progress and peaceful development. Poisonous plants and parasites, which otherwise would never have flowered, luxuriate and flourish on the devastation attending these upheavals.

Hitler and his whole circle are of this poisonous and parasitic vegetation, and so perhaps are many others who to-day figure on the changing landscape of Europe.

Papen, however, is one of the sowers who helped to sow the seed for this crop. He enjoys the fruits of this historic eruption. And perhaps, to a certain degree, he is himself one of the poisonous plants.

### *Portrait of an Adventurer*

When I met Franz von Papen personally for the first time I had already heard much about him, and had read still more. This first encounter, which was soon to be followed by others, was therefore very useful to enable me to round off my impressions and judgment of this man.

My reception more or less fulfilled my expectations. Herr von Papen received me in his ministerial sanctum. He rose from the depths of a dark leather armchair, which was placed before a massive desk, and came towards me,

smiling most pleasantly and winningly, his hand outstretched to greet me. Involuntarily the thought forced itself upon me : a good-natured man, charming and inoffensive, with excellent manners, he makes a point, whatever the circumstances, of winning over everyone he meets, even though it be only a chance encounter, of drawing every visitor as it were into the sphere of influence of his personality. Franz von Papen, the great political adventurer, had nothing demoniacal, nothing audacious about him, nor even, let it be said, anything particularly interesting.

As we sat down at his desk to discuss some political questions which were the purpose of my visit, I was now at his side and I noticed a very marked peculiarity in the shape of his head. His brow is extraordinarily steep and lofty, and the top of his head slopes away abruptly from it towards the back. It struck me at the time that this head formation must be one of the principal reasons for the fundamental difference between this man's character and mentality and that natural to men with normally shaped heads.

A number of people have endeavoured to sketch a portrait of Franz von Papen in a short sentence or a few apt words.

In 1918 the American Press coined for Papen the designation 'The Clown of Three Continents'.

The American journalist Dorothy Thompson called him, in one of her articles, 'L'Homme fatal' or 'Typhoid Mary'.

In 1918 again General Allenby, after the seizure of Papen's papers, cabled to London asking what he should do, and received the following telegraphed reply. 'Forward papers to London. If von Papen captured do not intern—send him to a lunatic asylum.'

The *Manchester Guardian* called him 'an anachronism of a man', and added 'Papen is neither clever nor reliable nor popular'.

The writer Bennett Wheeler says of him, 'He had the volatility of a bird, the sublime confidence of an amateur and the ineffable valor of ignorance'.

Following my first conversation with Papen I had repeated opportunities of meeting him and of discussing political, social and economic matters, and in this way I was able to piece together my own picture of him. Franz von Papen, chief of a sabotage organisation, gentleman rider, cavalry officer, military attaché under the Kaiser's Empire, landed proprietor, Erbsälzer (inheritor of salt-mines), newspaper publisher, Reichschancellor, political prisoner, ambassador under Hitler, intriguer and plotter, has performed all these most contradictory functions only, as it were, as side-lines. *In the main he is a modern adventurer.*

He is an adventurer who has flourished and prospered on this political world eruption, the wars and unrest of the past twenty years. In his single person he has been able to act as a representative of the Kaiser's Empire, of Republican Germany and of Hitler's Third Reich : adept in the art of persuasion, a loyal servant to any master, personally ambitious, fond of notoriety and ever desirous of playing a decisive rôle : that is Franz von Papen.

His outward appearance must next be described. He is tall, unduly thin, almost lean, he stoops a little. He has a longish face with deeply indented lines on either side of his moustache. His hair is sparse and grizzled, carefully parted on the left side, his nose is straight and imperious. There are deep lines in his forehead and his eyes are bright blue and inclined to twinkle mockingly, and then there is that bizarrely fashioned skull. The whole gives the impression of an aristocratic and superior being, or, rather, of an overbred racehorse. His attire is always faultless without being dandified, whether he is wearing a lounge suit, evening dress or the uniform of a major of cavalry. His manners are correct, he overflows with good humour and cordiality, which appear to be radiated by his eyes, and also emphasised by his whole being and expressed by all his movements : the personification of good upbringing, affluence and an abounding self-assurance.

These externals do not harmonise in any way with the character of this modern adventurer. It must be conceded



FRANZ VON PAPEN.

[Keystone

all he knows how to employ others in his stead. Time after time in his over-colourful life he has had the chance of daring the grand coup. On at least three of these occasions he could have staked his life. And each time he preferred to desert his task in order to save his own skin. For this very reason this chameleonic and indubitably interesting personality is lacking in real greatness.

In the course of the following chapters we shall repeatedly have the opportunity of reporting Herr von Papen's speeches word for word. These speeches are mostly very well prepared, intelligent and full of purport. If one took the speeches as a reflection of the man himself one might get the idea that the portrait of Herr von Papen should be altered to his advantage. Unfortunately these fine speeches were not drafted by him. His friends who supplied him not only with the thoughts but also with their expression had to pay with their lives for their courage and brilliance.

### *Papen the Gravedigger*

One would have thought that this fine figure of a man, always friendly and jovial, with his good humour and his readiness to assist, simply must have been of some use, or even really valuable, to his friends and protégés. The contrary is the case. In the long career of Herr von Papen, whoever has come into comparatively close contact with him has been rewarded by death, imprisonment or some other grave calamity.

The life of Franz von Papen is divided into three completely distinct periods and each shall be described under its appropriate heading in this work :

1. The heroic period—as Papen himself has called it—when he was active as saboteur, officer and actual combatant. This comprises more or less the years from 1913 to 1919.
2. The political period, characterised by his activities as deputy of the Prussian Diet and political plotter, and crowned by his appointment as Chancellor of

the German Reich. This is approximately the period from 1919 to 1932.

3. The period as Hitler's accomplice. This may be reckoned from the beginning of 1933 until the present day, for Papen not only helped Hitler to seize power in the Reich, but also slipped Austria into his hands and fashioned the starting lever for the new World War.

These three periods in his life may be distinct both inwardly and outwardly, but there has been a factor common to all of them : the danger which Papen brings to his helpers, his counsellors and his friends.

Simply because they were his friends and collaborators, these men had to die or be cast into prison. But Papen himself stepped on over their corpses with smiling eyes, he laid wreaths on the graves he had dug for them and saved himself by their sacrifice.

In this, so say many of his critics, lies the demoniacal in him. This is sheer nonsense.

On the other hand, his passion for adventure, his gambling with the fortunes of men and nations, have caused Papen again and again in the course of his career to interfere in the lives of individuals ; and his interference has given rise to grave disasters and widespread calamities.

And in this, his opponents say, lies the mysterious danger accompanying every appearance of this man on the political stage.

This book will show that it is indeed a fact that Papen has brought death and disaster to tens of thousands, and that he has repeatedly jeopardised the safety of humanity ; but behind all this there is nothing demoniacal, nothing mysterious, but only irresponsibility, lack of consideration, frivolity and political shortsightedness, which last is closely akin to criminality.

In his ' heroic period ' Franz von Papen conceived plots which were to profit the Fatherland. In fact, by his machinations he accelerated the entry of the United States



of America into the war against Germany, and thus contributed powerfully to the collapse of the Kaiser's Empire. As German Reichschancellor he aimed at creating a government of National concentration, but in doing this he destroyed the democratic parties and helped Hitler to the dictatorship.

In the most famous of his speeches, the Marburg speech of 17th June 1934, he intended to steer National Socialism into more moderate channels. But he did not fight his way through. A fortnight later he was to play the coward and flee to save his life, leaving the National Socialists victorious.

In the autumn of 1939 he inaugurated the union between Germany and the Soviet, to do Hitler and the Third Reich a service. The consequences of this deed cannot at the moment be estimated, even roughly. But it is not very probable that in this he has proved himself of service to the Fatherland, or to the world in general.

The present generation is fortunately too prosaic to believe in witchcraft. The day of a Dr. Mirakel, a Cagliostro, a Faust, is past, because modern science and psycho-analysis can probe too deeply into the soul and being of man. Moreover, it must be said to his credit that Papen himself has never sought to give a demoniacal or mysterious impression. Yet he may be compared with the witch-doctors among the African negroes. They know very well that they are charlatans and have no supernatural powers, but nevertheless they make use of their position, acquired by birth or fortune, readily to sacrifice others when it helps their own reputation or influence. Unfortunately with these black magicians no one takes the trouble to cast light on their motives because their sphere of influence is too limited and too modest to interest a wider public.

With Franz von Papen it is otherwise. The range and damaging effect of his influence has been all too great. It is therefore well worth the trouble not only to describe the repercussions of his various exploits but also to examine his motives. And then it becomes patently obvious that the primary causes of events of far-reaching importance have

been brutal egoism, the will to power, wanton thoughtlessness and often perhaps even the intentional 'neutralisation' of accessories and confidants.

If this man is called a gravedigger, the designation is only too apt.

A few examples must be given in advance which will later be dealt with in greater detail.

In 1914 and 1915 Franz von Papen, as German Military Attaché, started widely planned organisations in Mexico and the United States for spying and sabotage. The aim of the organisations was to obstruct supplies of arms and munitions from the United States to the Entente Powers. There were explosions in munition factories, bridges and port buildings were blown up, infernal machines were smuggled aboard the transports, the steering gear of steamships was destroyed. The destruction amounted to millions of pounds, and hundreds of lives were lost. At a pinch all these measures could be reckoned as normal affairs of war. They did not claim sacrifices from Papen's immediate circle. But in the prosecution of his acts of sabotage in the United States he made use of a number of true-hearted German patriots, some hundred or so all told. At the end of 1915, when Papen, as *persona non grata* with the American Government at Washington, was recalled at their request, he took with him in his official luggage a portion of the documents relating to his assistants. When his trunk was searched by the British authorities at Falmouth, the counterfoils of his cheque-books were seized with other important papers. In these were faithfully recorded payments made for acts of sabotage ordered. By this means Herr von Papen delivered up to judgment more than forty of his immediate associates. They were all arrested, interned and imprisoned : many of them died while still prisoners.

As if that were not enough, Papen had the rest of his correspondence, documents and papers sent by lengthy and circuitous routes, first to Germany and then on to Palestine, which he made his next centre of activity and passed endless hours of boredom in his tent. Here in Asia Minor, just

for the sake of something to occupy himself with, he sought to pick up the threads of his old connections, a thing he was not officially allowed to do. But an English army made a surprise advance in Palestine, and Papen was obliged to flee in his pyjamas in order literally to escape with his 'skin', and the remainder of his American records, which also comprised a host of addresses in India, Asia Minor, South America and Ireland, fell into the hands of the English.

No fewer than seventy persons, friends and accomplices of Papen, were now handed over to justice by this fresh piece of carelessness. Many had to pay with their lives for their friendship with Papen. Only he himself was able to escape to Germany unmolested.

For twelve years Franz von Papen vanished from the limelight. These years were perhaps too quiet and peaceful to provide a proper setting for an adventurer of his stamp. Only when Hitler jostled his way into Central Europe, and brought the necessary atmosphere of unrest and its accompaniment of unavoidable eruptions, was the cue given for the reappearance of Papen and his leading lady—Death.

It was General von Schleicher who in May 1932 drew him into the searching light of world history and made him Reichschancellor. On the 30th June 1934 General von Schleicher and his wife were shot dead by the Gestapo.

On the 17th June 1934 Papen made a great political speech in the university city of Marburg. It had been prepared by his assistant, Dr. Edgar Jung. On the 26th June 1934 Dr. Edgar Jung was shot dead by the Gestapo.

One of Papen's most confidential advisers was the privy councillor Dr. Klausener, the leader of the Catholic Action in Germany. Dr. Klausener was shot dead in his office on 30th June 1934.

On the same day the same fate befell Hubert von Bohse, Herr von Papen's press chief. On the other hand, the remainder of his assistants, among them Fräulein von Stotzinger, his private secretary, were more fortunate. They were merely arrested and so escaped with their lives.

Four years later Papen was Hitler's ambassador in Austria.

His private secretary, Baron von Ketteler, rendered him a great service by revealing a plot against his life. On 16th May 1938 Baron von Ketteler's body was recovered from the Danube near Hainburg in Austria. He had been chloroformed and then thrown into the river.

Papen, the papal chamberlain, made use of his stay in Austria to strike up a friendship with Dr. Schuschnigg, that rigorously Catholic Chancellor of the Federal State. Schuschnigg paid for this friendship with the loss of his country, with imprisonment and extreme suffering.

Thus a ghostly array of dead men and prisoners lines the bloody route that Papen, the adventurer, has so far traversed. And let it be borne in mind that Herr von Papen still lives, he still holds his influential position, and still uses it, as much as ever he did, to sow the seeds of misery and disaster. Leaving aside those immediate victims who have just been enumerated, Papen's hands are still red with the blood of thousands. There are those who fell victims to his acts of sabotage in America, or who met their death under his leadership in the battles of the World War. The martyrdom of hundreds of thousands of blameless Austrians, Jews, Catholics and Monarchists whom he betrayed to Hitler is to be ascribed to his influence. Finally, he bears his full measure of guilt for the outbreak of the new war, for the thrust of the Soviet Union to the West, the sufferings of Finland and the new conflicts in Eastern Europe.

All this happened, and had to happen, to appease the ravening ambition of one man. Vanity, inconsiderateness and unscrupulousness, these are the main elements of the mystery which hovers round Franz von Papen. There is nothing supernatural or magical about it, the tale is one long tragedy. For this man who has caused so much bloodshed and misery has always escaped danger himself and sunned himself time and again in the beams of success. But it is the same success of which National Socialism boasts, the result of violence and injustice, and no success at all according to the standards of humanity accepted by mankind in general. Thus Franz von Papen has enrolled

himself ingloriously in the ranks of the criminal system of National Socialism, which he has not only helped to victory, but in whose name he also continues to practise his abominable activities.

*' Erbsälzer von Werl und Neuwerk '*

The song of parental ambition, crooned to the baby Franz in his cradle, could not have hinted that he would grow up to spend his days in the service of usurpers and brutal men. Heredity and environment conspired to ensure that his career should unfold itself in a setting of aristocratic habits, culture and religious influences.

The von Papen family stretches back over more than a thousand years into the Middle Ages. Charles the Great conferred upon a distant ancestor of von Papen rights, titles and possessions in Westphalia. It is an extraordinarily rich and fertile area which yields lucrative revenues both above and below the ground. On the surface stretch waving cornfields, lush meadows, ruddy heathlands, oak forests with gigantic old trees, gardens and thick hedges. Below ground are great salt and potassium deposits, the salt-works which have bestowed upon the von Papen family the name *Erbsälzer* (hereditary owners of salt-works). Behind Dortmund, in the wealthiest industrial area in Germany, is the Hellweg, the old Ruhr road, running away eastwards to Westphalia. Some three hours distant to the south-east is the little old town of Werl, which is noted for its beautiful old abbey. There for centuries the Papens have had their seat, and there too is the centre of the great salt deposits which are in the family's possession. The Papens' official title is *' Erbsälzer von Werl und Neuwerk '*.

Franz von Papen is indeed a German junker, although from many of his outward accompaniments one cannot consider him typical. He does not come from East Prussia, however, but from the west of Germany. He was born in Werl on the 29th October 1879. His father, like his forefathers, was not only an estate- and mine-owner, but also a serving officer in the cavalry. The management of their

estates and mines was handed over to managers and experts by these German nobles, while they themselves led the life of wealthy aristocrats. For these *Erbsälzer* the obvious thing to do was to become officers who could devote a portion of their income to riotous living whilst performing purely perfunctory duties. Complying with the tradition current in many families, the Papens served in the 5th Regiment of Uhlans. Wolf von Papen, Franz's father, took part as an officer of this regiment in Germany's wars of 1866 (against Austria) and 1870 (against France). He gained distinction for himself in various cavalry charges—distinction which, because of his name, was greater than his achievements actually merited.

It is by no means unimportant to sketch Franz von Papen's descent and environment. The milieu may best be designated by the following four elements : aristocrat by birth, cavalry officer, papal chamberlain and heir to great riches. For these influences, which operated in him from his earliest youth upwards, resulted in his being immune to the accidents of an ordinary career. It was of no moment to him if he refused a post, if he lost a bet on a horse or even if he compromised his name. A gross blunder committed by a politician closes his career for him ; incompetence in an official is rewarded by dismissal. For Franz von Papen this danger did not exist. He could always retire to his estates or cultivate his connections with the Church. He had no need to work at all to lead the life of a fine gentleman. His appearances on the stage of history have been, and still are, demonstrating this independence. He is not troubled by inferiority complexes, although he knows that he has committed a host of unpardonable blunders. He has no need to fear that he will starve if he loses a well-paid job. The long wait in the antechamber is unknown to him : it is he who makes others wait. He is aware that nobles of his stamp are not measured by the same standard nor brought to justice with the same pitilessness as is reserved for the ordinary citizen who has painfully risen by his own efforts.

From the beginning his education was designed to enable him to play the elegant, independent junker. It was rigorously Catholic, for the Papen family was very clerically disposed, but in other respects was a thorough preparation for a rich inheritance rather than a line of business. He left high school without the masters having made any serious impression on him. He spent much more time in the playing field and the gymnasium and on horseback than in the classroom. As a boy he was a regular ruffian who bullied his companions unmercifully, and he early joined—what else was he to do?—the 5th Regiment of Uhlans at Düsseldorf as a subaltern. All his ancestors had been officers of some rank in this regiment, and although young Papen was in no way specially accomplished or trained, he became lieutenant when he was nineteen. The Uhlans were chiefly famous on account of their spirited horsemanship; the intellectual endowment of their officers was a minor consideration. And young Papen was a daring horseman. When only eighteen or nineteen he rode in races and won numerous prizes and as many hearts. The abundant revenues, obtained from the salt-works and other family possessions which were at the disposal of the young officer, made it possible for him to lead a fast and profligate life, but he was not obliged to pursue any further course of study, for this was not needed in his military career. This is important. For in speeches which were made later there speaks a deep thinker, which Papen does not appear to be. But he was always an adept at finding suitable collaborators to draft his speeches for him.

The young officer was tall and elegant, he cut a fine figure, and had access, not only to all the titled families, but also to the big industrialists. A bevy of rich heiresses bestirred themselves to capture this gentleman jockey, this elegant dancer. But Franz von Papen first desired to sow his wild oats. Finally, at the age of twenty-six, he decided to marry Marthe von Boch, one of the richest heiresses among the industrialists.

*The Boch-Galhau Family*

Marthe von Boch was just such a daughter of a wealthy industrialist as has been depicted in countless novels. She was very spoilt, very presumptuous and completely uninterested in politics or any scientific subject. She always followed the latest fashion in her dress, and was superficial and as little burdened by education or any other serious interests as was her husband. But she was rich and related to numerous influential families, which fact was given due consideration when Franz von Papen came to choose a wife. René von Boch-Galhau, her father, was a partner in the great pottery concern of Villeroy & Boch, and moreover held directorships in numerous large manufacturing firms in the Rhine and Ruhr, France, Belgium and Luxemburg. Papen's mother-in-law came of a Luxemburg family, Pescatore by name, and was likewise related by blood and marriage with numerous families in Western European industry, particularly in Luxemburg and France. René von Boch-Galhau died in 1908, and a great part of his possessions passed to Marthe von Papen and her husband. (For curiosity's sake it must here be mentioned that the German Reichschancellor Hermann Müller, who was at the head of the German Government two years before Papen, had been in his time a commercial traveller for the firm of Villeroy & Boch.)

In his younger days Papen had learnt a little English and French. By his connection with the house of Villeroy & Boch he was frequently in French company, but his English is not by any means perfect.

One of his chief links with the Saar dates from this period, when he acquired the Wallerfangen estate. In later years this was always his retreat after botching some task, or when one of his plans had badly miscarried.

But at that time the career of Franz von Papen, thanks to his father-in-law's wealth and thanks to his rapid promotion in the Army, proceeded without let or hindrance. In 1908 he became first lieutenant, and only five years later, in 1913, captain on the General Staff. At that time he was



barely thirty-four years old, and the influence of his connections may best be perceived from the fact that he was entrusted with so important a position at such an early age. As though that were not enough, however, in the autumn of 1913 he was appointed military attaché of the Imperial Government of Germany to the United States of America and simultaneously to Mexico.

# FIRST PART

## THE HEROIC PERIOD

### CHAPTER I

#### *Military Attaché in Washington and Mexico*

At the end of March 1914 the following letter from the War Ministry was received at the German Embassy in Washington :

Ministry of War,  
No. 536/14, G.A.I.  
*Secret.*

BERLIN,  
March 12th, 1914.

To the Military Attaché,  
Captain von Papen,  
Washington.

According to newspaper reports several railway trains were blown up by revolutionaries during the trouble in Mexico.

In order to form an opinion whether in the event of a European war explosions of this kind would have to be reckoned with, it is requested that, if possible, information should be obtained as to how these attacks have been carried out. Were mines and explosives placed on lines which were little guarded, or were the attacks carried out from the train by igniting a charge of dynamite, or by the employment of infernal machines?

By order :

R. VON WILD.

Bomb outrages on railways, which to-day have unfortunately become a habit in all countries, at that time

appeared so unusual to the War Ministry in Berlin that they expressly commissioned their military attaché to institute an official investigation into these affairs and with this object to undertake the very wearisome journey to Mexico.

### *The Post of Military Attaché*

Investigations into rebel attacks on railways are among the duties of a military attaché. For, in the usual way, these officers, as representatives of a foreign power, have to observe the military movements in progress in the country to which they are accredited. And revolutions and counter-revolutions are in a certain sense military activities. The military attachés have to report on the armament and number of the troops, new military inventions, the production of arms and munitions and similar matters. Now in the period before the World War neither the United States of America nor Mexico was a military state; so that a military attaché there was only used as it were as an ornament, and for the sake of having a representative. The more important military experts were only despatched to those states where large armies existed, and these were France, Russia, Austria and Italy. England was then as uninteresting to the German Army as were the United States, because neither country had a standing army based on general conscription. This was also the reason why Franz von Papen, thanks to important influence, was appointed to Washington, although he was without experience of any kind in military science or strategy. But he was a representative with some charm of manner and a little knowledge of the English language.

In his first few months in America Papen had hardly anything to do. The outrages with explosives in Mexico were used as a pretext for at least giving him some sort of occupation.

At that time the German Envoy in Mexico was Admiral von Hintze, a particular protégé of the Kaiser. Mexico was rather uncertain territory because revolutions and

counter-revolutions frequently alternated. The insurgents, mostly troops of bandits, perpetrated the outrages referred to in the above letter, partly to work against the existing government and partly for the sake of plunder.

In the period before the World War Huerta and Carranza were wrestling for power in Mexico. Both had entered politics more or less as bandit leaders, both had armies of mercenaries composed of men who had been promoted from their former bands, and both were opponents of the United States, whose intervention in the internal confusion of Mexico was feared. Admiral von Hintze, the German Envoy, had little sympathy with the bandit chiefs at the head of affairs in Mexico, and sent rather depreciatory reports to his Government regarding the political importance of these men. As opposed to this, in the German Embassy at Washington they were toying with the idea that in the event of a World War, which already appeared to be threatening in the spring of 1914, Mexico might be a prospective ally for Germany: the object being to pin the United States to its own frontiers, and to prevent the Government at Washington from taking part in a European war against Germany.

From his first major activities as a military attaché Papen learnt two things: firstly, the use of explosives in other countries after the Mexican pattern; secondly, the game of intrigue in higher politics. For a few months later he endeavoured to put into practice in the United States the experience he had gained from the Mexican outrages. Since then such outrages have become one of the chief weapons of the National Socialists and their confederates in numerous countries in Europe.

Papen sent reports on Huerta to Washington which were more favourable than those previously sent by Admiral von Hintze. In Herr von Papen's luggage, which was seized by the English at Falmouth on the 2nd January 1916, the following letter, sent to him from Captain Boy-Ed, the German Naval Attaché in Washington, was discovered, among other things:

German Embassy,  
Washington, D.C.

WASHINGTON,

May 25th, 1914.

To Captain von Papen,  
Military Attaché  
(at present in Mexico).

DEAR PAPEN,

Best thanks for your friendly and instructive letter of May 11th.

Your arguments made a great impression, not only on Count Bernstorff, but also on the Austrian Ambassador.

For my part, I was specially pleased by what you wrote about Huerta : the only strong man in Mexico. In my opinion Admiral von Hintze was not quite right in his estimate of him. For Huerta can scarcely be such a drunken ruffian as Hintze so often implies, if only because a chronic drunkard could hardly have kept so uncertain a position under such uncommonly difficult circumstances. I met a number of people in Mexico City who were in close touch with Huerta, and without exception they all spoke very highly of the President's patriotism, capacity and energy.

I likewise do not share the views of your worthy admiral about the timeliness or the possibility of international intervention in Mexico. . . .

Yours,  
Boy-Ed.

At that time Count Bernstorff was the German Ambassador in Washington, and Dr. Dumba the Ambassador for Austria-Hungary.

This letter from Boy-Ed appears to have been taken by Papen as an invitation to develop his relations with Huerta. In any case, he extended his stay in Mexico City substantially longer than was necessary for the investigation of the outrages. For Papen was soon convinced that these attacks had been carried out in a way which in the meantime has unfortunately become all too common in many parts of Europe ; dynamite bombs were placed on the rails

and made to explode by the impact of the engine. In certain cases the culprits had already made use of bombs exploded by an electric fuse at the moment that a train passed a definite spot or crossed a bridge.

*The Outbreak of the World War*

From the end of March to the end of July, a full four months, Papen remained in Mexico, several times striving to make and strengthen an alliance with Huerta, but without ever really succeeding. It eventually proved that Admiral von Hintze was right when he assumed there were to be no dealings with Huerta in Mexico, and Papen was absolutely in error, for later, after he had been driven out by Carranza, Huerta found sanctuary in the United States. The United States would never have received him if they had not been convinced that he would do nothing against them.

In the last days of July, when the outbreak of the World War was only a question of days, Papen received instructions from the War Ministry in Berlin to return to Washington forthwith. Even then there was still nothing concrete for a military attaché to do there, but Berlin regarded it as more important that he should pass his time in Washington than in Mexico City.

At first the Government of the United States took up an entirely neutral attitude. The majority of the American nation was most sharply opposed to any connection with the European War. The business and financial world, in particular, opposed any action which would incur the risk of international entanglements, because no one knew which side would finally be victorious and there was no wish to flirt with either group of Powers.

Count Bernstorff, the German Ambassador in Washington, in the first few months after the outbreak of war had but one endeavour—to make the relations between his Government and Washington as friendly as possible. Even if Germany could not hope that the United States would take part in the war on the side of the Central Powers,

yet she believed at that time that she could at least keep America strictly neutral.

Three things thwarted this attempt :

the preponderance of English propaganda in America, which by degrees completely overshadowed the German variety ;

the declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare by the German Admiralty ;

the disastrous activity of Captain von Papen, the German Military Attaché at Washington.

From the beginning the English propaganda used reports of German atrocities in Belgium and France. It was thus able to neutralise the first German successes on the Western Front by describing their methods ; very soon it was able to work up an opinion in the States which was outspokenly hostile to Germany and friendly to the Entente.

This opinion was strengthened, when in February 1915 the German Admiralty not only declared unrestricted submarine warfare, but also proposed the sinking of passenger boats, an action which aroused throughout America a howl of rage and indignation. It was then that the first voices were heard urging the entry of the States on the side of the Entente against Germany, the object being to ward off these attacks and the better to protect American interests.

Immediately after the outbreak of war, English, French and Russian agents started placing large munition and armament orders with American factories. These countries were specially interested in the purchase of American shells, as these had been demonstrated as particularly effective in the battles on the Western Front, because they were not made of iron on the old method, but turned out of steel. The effect of these steel-cased shells was incomparably more powerful and more devastating than that of the old shells, and the German Command very soon began seriously to feel the execution wrought by these American munitions.

Naturally the German Government tried, through the agency of their military attaché in Washington, to carry out purchases of arms and munitions from the American

factories. Smaller purchases were successful enough, but the transport of these munitions to Germany was practically impossible because England and France were in command of the high seas, and held up and seized nearly every vessel carrying war material which was destined for Germany.

At first Papen believed that by the purchase or ordering of vast quantities of war material he would succeed in busying American factories to such an extent that the supplies for the Entente would be prejudiced. But after a short time it was evident that so many American factories could be switched over to the manufacture of arms and munitions, and the productive capacity of such firms was so unlimited, that the largest orders Germany might give could in no way prevent or even delay the dispatch of war material to England and France.

Finally Papen founded his own company, The Bridgeport Projectile Company of Bridgeport, Connecticut, which was to interfere (though in practice it had little effect) in the American supplies of arms to the Entente Powers. Two of Papen's documents were later seized; they were, it is true, written at a later date, but they throw some light on this side of his activities.

They read as follows :

Mr. Carl Heynen, Treasurer, Room 1807,  
60, Wall Street, New York City.

BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT,

Sept. 11th, 1915.

DEAR SIR,

Specifications and drawings for 3.015 shrapnel cases and 4.111 high-explosive shell duly received, and beg to advise as follows :

*First* : We will be unable to furnish steel under both physical and chemical specifications owing to the fact that manufacturers of steel in the United States will only assume responsibility under one of these requirements. Our quotations are based on furnishing steel as per physical requirements only, as this in our opinion is the most essential.

*Second* : Shrapnel cases : the steel already ordered will



factories. Smaller purchases were successful enough, but the transport of these munitions to Germany was practically impossible because England and France were in command of the high seas, and held up and seized nearly every vessel carrying war material which was destined for Germany.

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Mr. Carl Heynen, Treasurer, Room 1807,  
60, Wall Street, New York City.

BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT,

Sept. 11th, 1915.

DEAR SIR,

Specifications and drawings for 3.015 shrapnel cases and 4.11 high-explosive shell duly received, and beg to advise as follows :

*First* : We will be unable to furnish steel under both physical and chemical specifications owing to the fact that manufacturers of steel in the United States will only assume responsibility under one of these requirements. Our quotations are based on furnishing steel as per physical requirements only, as this in our opinion is the most essential.

*Second* : Shrapnel cases : the steel already ordered will

not be suitable for the new case owing to the fact that it is greater in length and diameter than the present style. The additional cost, covering material, labour, tools, etc., will be 50c. per case. This does not include diaphragm or head, only the finished and banded case, in accordance with new drawings and specifications furnished.

*Third* : High-explosive shell : price of this shell in lots of 500,000 is 13/00 each. This does not include the head, but includes the finished shell in all other respects ; also the banding of same, all in accordance with drawings and specifications furnished.

The above prices are based on present market conditions of labour and material.

Yours very truly,

(THE BRIDGEPORT PROJECTILE COMPANY)

WALTER H. KNIGHT (President).

*Memorandum of interview between Mr. George W. Hoadley, Captain F. von Papen, Captain Hans Tauscher and Mr. Carl Heynen*

NEW YORK, December 21st, 1915.

It was agreed that the American shrapnel shell be manufactured until instructions to the contrary are received.

Mr. Hoadley stated that it would take at least three months to get the tools necessary for the manufacture of shell of any different design.

Mr. Hoadley stated that since the date of the original contract wages to skilled labour had increased 25% to 50%, and the price of steel 50% to 100%.

Mr. Hoadley stated that the American steel manufacturers never guarantee both the chemical and physical specifications of steel ; that they guarantee *either* the chemical *or* the physical only. American steel never comes up to German specifications because of its different process and manufacture.

If shells of German design are ordered, it will be impossible to make firing tests unless a gun and the necessary accessories are shipped here from Germany. As a substitute, it is proposed to make such firing tests in a bomb-proof place by electrical explosion. It was

agreed that Mr. Hoadley, till date, has complied with all the conditions of the contract of the 1st April, with the exception of the commencement of delivery of shells, which is due to *force majeure*, i.e. to failure to obtain the punctual delivery of machinery and tools owing to strikes in the machine factories.

Both these documents will be referred to again. Captain Hans Tauscher, mentioned in the second, was the representative in the United States of the German Krupp works. Papen had repeatedly interested him in his ventures.

To this side of Papen's activities no objection could be taken, for it indubitably came within the sphere of a military attaché's work. It was naturally vexatious that these documents should fall into the hands of Germany's enemies at that time. That is something which a military attaché should never allow to happen.

But Papen did not let it rest there. He set about instituting acts of sabotage, which did not meet with the approval of the German Ambassador, Count Bernstorff.

In order to understand how Papen was thus able to place himself in open opposition to Count Bernstorff, we must here briefly sketch the peculiar position of the German military attachés. These officers were, it is true, officially appointed to the ambassador of the time; in their activities, however, they were independent to an extraordinary degree. Whilst the ambassador could only communicate with the Foreign Office, the military attaché was in direct communication with his own superiors. It was quite sufficient if he sent the ambassador a copy of his report at the same time as he dispatched it. Thus the ambassador certainly always knew what his attaché had done, but he had no opportunity of communicating orders to him, or of preventing him from taking action.

This explains why Count Bernstorff, who was as a general rule a capable diplomat, was forced to look impotently on while Papen busied himself with various matters which seriously compromised German official representation. He was not in a position to do anything to prevent them.

## CHAPTER 2

### *Sabotage*

#### *After the Mexican Example*

As early as the end of 1914 ever more insistent telegrams arrived from Berlin for the military attaché in Washington, requiring him to make some effective proposals for stopping the American supplies of arms to the Entente ; or at least for intensifying German propaganda in America to such an extent that the American public should exercise pressure against the export of arms and munitions from the United States.

Thereupon Papen remembered the outrages which had occurred in Mexico a few months before, and he resolved, without the knowledge of the ambassador Count Bernstorff, to set afoot similar activities himself with the object of holding up or destroying American arms transports. As the United States was then at peace with Germany, all the German nationals there had unhampered freedom of movement, and consequently it was by no means difficult for Papen to effect acts of sabotage with the assistance of a number of his fellow countrymen. Every one of these men was prepared to sacrifice his life for the Fatherland. As there was no possibility, or at least only the slightest, of their returning to Germany to fight at the front, these patriots declared themselves prepared ' to fight secretly on the American front '.

Although, as a military attaché, Herr von Papen was merely accredited to Washington and consequently should only have performed his duties there, yet he set about establishing his own office with the firm of Amsinck at New York. This office was subordinated to the military

attaché and was managed by Papen's two secretaries, Georg von Skal and Walter von Igel. In fact, it was through this office that all the business connected with sabotage and the prevention of the production of war material in America was conducted.

The method which Papen used was simple enough. Railway bridges, docks, munition factories and other works where orders were in progress for the Entente were blown up with dynamite. Destruction of munitions was either accomplished at the dumps or during their transport, or damage was done to factory buildings, means of communication, etc., which were important for further production or disposal.

The American writer, Walter Millis, in his book *Road to War*, which deals with the causes of America's entry into the World War, describes the period which followed Papen's initiation of activities in this direction. He says :

'At the same time a succession of fires and explosions in munition plants began to occur. A blast at a Du-Pont plant in Delaware took thirty-one lives at the end of November, and there were numerous lesser catastrophes.'

Elsewhere he notes :

'The public was manifesting a universal feeling of fear and suspicion.'

He also quotes a letter dated the middle of July 1915 from President Wilson to Sir Edward Grey ; his extract runs :

'Expect any measures against Germany to be followed immediately by explosions on board United States ships, and at all arsenals by the crippling of means of communication, by the appearance of submarines and by armed demonstrations by large bodies of well-disciplined men.'

Further, from all reports it is obvious that extraordinary measures were taken by the American Government to protect arms factories, docks and freighters.

The most notorious case of sabotage which was attempted was that of the Vanceboro Bridge, which carries the most important railway line from the United States over a canal

to Canada. The attempt on this bridge was made by a German national named Werner Horn on the 2nd February 1915. It miscarried, however, and Horn was caught red-handed and immediately handed over to the proper authorities for trial. Werner Horn was one of Papen's men. On Papen's advice he very naively wore a red, white and black tie, which in Papen's opinion would turn him into an active combatant, and so justify his action.

He was immediately and keenly cross-questioned, and at once testified that he had made this attempt on the orders of Herr von Papen, the German Military Attaché. The object was to apply a tourniquet to this important railway artery between America and Canada, and thus at any rate to retard possible war supplies to England.

This confession caused an enormous sensation among the American public.

For some hours the German Ambassador and the military attaché were under a cloud. Then promptly came an official declaration by Herr von Papen that he had not now, nor had he ever had, any connection with Werner Horn, and that what the latter had testified must be a figment of his imagination.

At that time there was nothing for the American Government to do but to give credence to this official declaration, and Werner Horn was sentenced as an ordinary terrorist.

On the 2nd January 1916, after Papen's recall, a counter-foil of one of his cheques was found by the British authorities at Falmouth in his luggage, reading :

'No. 87. Amsinck & Co., 700 Dollars (for Horn).'

The British White Paper remarks in this connection :

'This cheque provides the sum of 700 Dollars for Horn, probably the man who made the attempt on the Vanceboro Bridge. It is dated the 18th January, and the attempt on the bridge took place on the 2nd February' (1915).

In the period between February and May a series of other similar attacks took place on the west coast of America in the area round Seattle.

There the German Consul-General, Dr. Bopp, had his

office, and he had placed himself very zealously at Papen's service. Among the cheque counterfoils which were later found was No. 125 bearing the note :

'For German Consulate, Seattle. May 11th, 1915. For Schulenburg.'

The British White Paper laconically remarks :

'A dynamite explosion in Seattle Harbour took place on May 30th, 1915.'

All these things only became known when Papen had left America. Therefore for the time he could pursue his activities undisturbed. He must, of course, have immediately realised that his superiors in Germany were not in agreement with the kind of sabotage which he was carrying on. For a few days before the attempt on the Vanceboro Bridge, Berlin, as a result of the representations of Count Bernstorff, had endeavoured by means of the following telegram to prevent Papen from doing further damage to German-American relations :

IIIb. Pol. 205.

BERLIN, NW., MOLTKE STRASSE 8.

24 January 1915.

*Secret.*

To the Auswaertige Amt,

With reference to message of 23rd inst.

It is requested that the following telegram be forwarded in code to Imperial Embassy in Washington.

For the Military Attaché.

For sabotage in the United States and Canada the names of suitable people are to be learnt from the following persons :

1. F . . .

2. O . . .

3. G . . .

1 and 2 absolutely reliable and discreet.

3 reliable but not always discreet.

The persons have been indicated through Sir Roger Casement. In the United States sabotage may cover all kinds of factories for delivery of war materials. *Railways, dams, bridges, however, must not be touched.*

Under no circumstances must the Embassy be compromised ; same applies to Irish-German Propaganda.

By order of the General Staff :

(Signed) : ZIMMERMANN.

Entry Journal

Auswaertiges Amt, F No. 3196.

(Signed) : GRAF MONTGELAS.

Captain Boy-Ed, the German Naval Attaché, was just as much interested as Papen in serving Germany, but even this man, who in other respects always worked hand in glove with Papen, could not agree with him over these escapades, as an undated letter which was found in Papen's possession proves.

This letter from Boy-Ed reads as follows :

DEAR PAPEN,

A secret agent who returned from Washington this evening made the following statement :

'The Washington people are very excited about von Papen and are having a constant watch kept on him. *They are in possession of a whole heap of incriminating evidence against him.*

'They have no evidence against Count B. and Captain B.-E.(!)

In this connection I would suggest with due diffidence that perhaps the first part of your telegram is rather too emphatically worded.

Yours ever

B.-E.

The fact that through Papen's quite incredible carelessness not only did the American Government hold a whole mass of incriminating evidence against him, but also simultaneously the American public was possessed by a growing uncertainty and suspicion and a mounting animosity against Germany, alarmed the German Ambassador, Count Bernstorff, and his Government.

Governments have a certain disinclination to recalling prematurely a diplomatic representative or a military attaché. In times of war this disinclination increases to



such an extent that they bear the unpleasantness caused by an incompetent representative rather than voluntarily propose a change in responsible personnel. For this reason it was decided in Berlin after exhaustive deliberation that an immediate recall of Herr von Papen was out of the question. On the other hand, the measures of sabotage proposed by von Papen were accepted in Berlin (as is evident from the letter printed above). But Berlin wished to limit them to factories, in which acts of sabotage were to be performed by the workers so that thereby American public property should remain untouched. The authorities in Berlin were by no means satisfied with the way in which Papen exceeded their injunctions, and the lack of discretion with which he carried out his task. As a way out of the difficulty the idea was conceived of keeping him in situ, and continuing the measures of sabotage instituted by him, but of separating them from official German representation and entrusting the execution of them in the United States to one man. The choice fell on Captain von Rintelen who had been attached to the Naval Staff in Berlin, and since the outbreak of war had already repeatedly proved his capacity for accomplishing special missions.

The dispatch of Captain von Rintelen came about, moreover, because it was discovered that the English Secret Service had deciphered the German secret code. He was to take a new one with him to Washington. Berlin must have been afraid that Herr von Papen, who was not only vain, but also very jealous, would seriously hinder Rintelen's activities. Consequently it was decided in advance to make him more conciliatory towards Rintelen by sending him, through Rintelen, the Iron Cross, second class, although Papen had really done nothing either in action or on the home front to deserve it.

#### *Captain von Rintelen*

Captain von Rintelen, armed with a Swiss passport, started his journey on 22nd March 1915 via Norway, and

arrived in New York in the early days of April. Although he had expressly emphasised both to Dr. Zimmermann, the German Secretary of State, and to Count Bernstorff, the German Ambassador, that he had undertaken this mission on his own responsibility, and that he personally was answerable for all his actions, it was naturally unavoidable that he should meet the ambassador, and Papen and Boy-Ed as well, if only to hand over the code and the decoration. When, after a few months, Rintelen was recalled from America, one would have expected Herr von Papen to pick up the threads of the sabotage attempts so successfully put in hand by the former. It is necessary for this reason briefly to sketch here the nature of Herr von Rintelen's activities in the United States. They contrasted most forcibly with the very clumsy efforts previously made by Papen. The excuse must of course be made for Papen that he was on an official mission, and consequently had not the same freedom of movement as Captain von Rintelen, who had only been semi-officially sent out from Germany. But if Papen had really been as inventive as he believed himself to be, he would have sought out, in America itself, a man just as good whom he could trust to undertake similar acts on his own responsibility.

In his exciting book, *The Dark Invader* (published in London by Lovat Dickson Ltd. in 1933, and in Penguin Books in 1936, and in America by the Macmillan Company of New York), Captain von Rintelen has described his activities in the United States and the following facts are taken from his work with his permission.

As opposed to Papen, Rintelen took the view (which moreover represented that of his masters in Berlin) that acts of violence in American territory were to be avoided absolutely, that sabotage was not to endanger human life and that there was only one key objective: to hamper and disorganise the supplies of American arms and munitions to the Entente.

The length of Rintelen's stay in America was four months in all. But during this time he introduced three methods

which most certainly had the desired effect. They consisted of the following :

Firstly, with the assistance of German and Irish dockers and sailors, so-called ' incendiary cigars ' were stowed away in various hiding-places on the munition ships chartered by the Allies. After a few days, when the vessels were on the high seas, these ' cigars ' caused fires on board and compelled the captain to put into the nearest port. In the trial of Rintelen thirty-two cases were alluded to in which this method was successful.

Secondly, small infernal machines were affixed to the steering-gear of outward-bound munition ships. These after a few days exploded as a result of the incessant turning of the wheel, and the ship was rendered rudderless. Six of such cases were mentioned.

Thirdly, Rintelen and his assistants staged strikes at the American docks and so prevented vessels from sailing.

The object of all these three methods was that consignments already cleared either should not arrive in Russian, English or French ports, or if they did, then they should be late. By this means the supply of munitions to the front was made more difficult because the railroad and loading and unloading system of the armies was disorganised. But as regards the details of these methods it is perhaps best to let Rintelen speak for himself. This is what he says in his book :

I had by now established contact with all sorts of ' shady ' characters, some of whom had secret schemes, and one day I was visited by the German chemist, Dr. Scheele. . . . He began by presenting a strong letter of recommendation from our Military Attaché, Captain Papen, and continued by saying that I was a man with varied interests, and that he was a chemist, with a new invention which he would like to offer me. I thought he was rather hesitant, so I moved my chair nearer and told him that he had come to the right place and had only to reveal the purpose of his invention ; if it were any good, he could be sure that I would acquire it ;

for the rest, I was the most discreet man in New York, and he could trust me. He plucked up courage, took a piece of lead out of his pocket, which was as big as a cigar, laid it on my desk and began to explain.

This piece of lead was hollow inside. Into the middle of the tube a circular disc of copper had been pressed and soldered, dividing it into two chambers. One of these chambers was filled with picric acid, the other with sulphuric acid or some other inflammable liquid. A strong plug made of wax with a simple lead cap made both ends airtight. The copper disc could be as thick or as thin as we pleased. If it were thick, the two acids on either side took a long time to eat their way through. If it were thin, the mingling of the two acids would occur within a few days. By regulating the thickness of the disc it was possible to determine the time when the acids should come together. This formed a safe and efficient time-fuse. When the two acids mingled at the appointed time, a silent but intense flame, from twenty to thirty centimetres long, shot out from both ends of the tube, and while it was still burning the lead casing melted away without a trace : *Spurlos* !

I looked at Dr. Scheele. I had hit upon a plan in which this 'cigar' should play the chief part, and I asked the chemist to demonstrate his invention by an experiment. We went out into a little wood near the town. He chose a very thin copper disc, put it in the tube and laid the apparatus on the ground. We stood near by. If the detonator worked, I could put my scheme into operation. I knew what use could be made of this 'diabolical' invention ; and all that was necessary was that it should function. Heavens knows it did ! The stream of flame which suddenly shot out of the confounded 'cigar' nearly blinded me, it was so strong ; and the lead melted into an almost invisible fragment.

When I looked round I saw Dr. Scheele leaning against a tree. He was gazing with bemused eyes at the tiny piece of lead, all that was left of his fiery magic.

'That was pretty good, wasn't it?'

'I'll say it was !'

We soon came to terms. He was first given a round

cheque in return for allowing me to use the 'cigar' in any way I wished. I asked him to return on the following day, and in the meantime I secured a few assistants—captains of German ships with whom I had already become good friends, and Irishmen whose 'approval' I had won. The Irishmen had no idea who I was, nor did they ask me. It was sufficient for them that I was not very friendly towards England. I collected these men together, and took them to my office. I was sure that I could trust them, and they did not disappoint me. I came straight to the point and explained to them that I had found a means of stopping the hated shipments of munitions, and one which would not infringe American neutrality as far as I was concerned. The construction of the 'cigars' was explained to them, and I inquired if it were possible to smuggle them unobserved on to the transports which were carrying explosives to Europe. They were unanimously of the opinion that this could be very easily arranged, and had no scruples since the incendiary bombs would not go off till the vessels were outside American territorial waters. . . .

My assistants came in the evenings, and we discussed in my office what we should do next. The Irish had already thought out a plan. They knew their countrymen who worked in the docks as stevedores and lightermen and told me that these people were willing to plant our 'cigars' on British munition transports. They had even chosen a ship, the *Phoebus*, which was to sail in a few days, and whose hold was packed with shells. I opened the drawer of my desk which contained the case of detonators, and it was soon emptied. Next morning the dockers who were in the plot carried their barrels, cases and sacks on board the *Phoebus*, and as soon as they had assured themselves that they were unobserved, they bent down swiftly in a dark corner of the hold and hid one of our detonators among the cargo. When the *Phoebus* left for Archangel, with a cargo of high-explosive shells on board, it carried two of these destructive articles in each of three holds. . . .

We sat in our office and waited for the first success. We had subscribed to the *Shipping News*, which printed

the daily reports of Lloyd's in London concerning everything to do with shipping and shipping insurance. We had calculated the date on which the accident was to take place, but a few days passed and there was still nothing about the *Phoebus* in the paper. Suddenly we saw :

'*Accidents.* S.S. *Phoebus* from New York—destination Archangel—caught fire at sea. Brought into port of Liverpool by H.M.S. *Ajax*.'

This was our first success, and everything had happened just as we had planned. . . .

Rintelen describes the second of these methods in the following way :

The first act of the new firm was to acquire an idea, the father of which was a young German engineer named Fay. He declared that he had invented a machine which was capable of tearing off a ship's rudder while at sea. He made a good impression on me, and after discussing the matter with my captains I gave Fay money to prepare his experiments. He returned a week later and said he was ready. I sent him into the country with a couple of the captains to buy a piece of ground in a deserted region which was well hidden by trees. Here they constructed the stern of a ship out of wood and attached to it a genuine rudder. To this rudder was fixed a detonator, the tip of which carried an iron pin which was needle-shaped at the lower end. The pin was connected with the rudder-shaft itself; and as the shaft revolved the iron pin turned with it, gradually boring its way into the detonator, until it eventually pierced the fulminate and caused an explosion which blew away the rudder.

When the model had been solidly constructed, Fay attached his apparatus and began to revolve the rudder. The captains stood at a respectful distance and Fay kept on turning for about an hour or so. Then there was a terrific bang, and bits of the model flew about the captains' ears. Fay himself went up into the air, but came down again in the wood with only a few injured ribs. The trees themselves were damaged, and a fire broke out

which they had to extinguish. They then got into the car and returned to New York to report to me that the invention had functioned efficiently.

Fay was financed with enough money to carry on his experiments, until he succeeded in producing his apparatus in a handy form and was ready to make his first attempt. He took a motor-boat out into the harbour one evening and apparently had engine trouble, for he drew up alongside the rudder of one of the big munition transports and made fast. He actually managed in two cases to fix his machine, and we waited results. They were announced in due course by the *Shipping News*, and the New York papers were agitated. There had been two mysterious accidents, and nobody could say how they happened. Two transports had had their rudders torn away at sea and suffered serious damage to the stern. One of them had been abandoned by its crew and was drifting as a wreck on the Atlantic, while the other had had to be towed into the nearest harbour. . . .

Some of the dockers who were in sympathy with Germany, and particularly a number of Irishmen, showed reluctance to work aboard vessels carrying munitions to the Entente States. Rintelen set about founding an organisation that he called 'Labour's National Peace Council', whose object was to cause strikes among sailors, porters and other hands who were in the market for hire aboard these ships. Rintelen writes :

The first thing I did was to hire a large hall and organise a meeting, at which well-known men thundered against the export of munitions. Messrs. Buchanan and Fowler, members of Congress ; Mr. Hannis Taylor, the former American Ambassador in Madrid ; Mr. Monnett, a former Attorney-General ; together with a number of University professors, theologians and Labour Leaders appeared and raised their voices. I sat unobtrusively in a corner and watched my plans fructifying. None of the speakers had the faintest suspicion that he was in the 'service' of a German officer sitting among the audience. They knew the men who had asked them to

speaking, but had no idea that the strings were being pulled by somebody else. . . .

The next step was to persuade the men to strike, and to use strike pay as a bait for their refusal to work on munition ships. Rintelen goes on :

Kleist and Weiser [his two principal assistants] were busy in the vicinity of the pier at Hoboken, and the news was spread that 'Labour's National Peace Council' was prepared to pay strike benefits to all men ceasing work on munition transports, even if they had only been members for a day ; and before many hours had passed, a flock of workmen poured in, who paid their entrance subscriptions and immediately disappeared. Next morning they came back and said they had ceased work because their employers refused to pay them the extra wages they demanded on account of the danger of their duties. They received their strike pay, and when I passed by later in the afternoon I saw an astonishing sight. A vast crowd was thronging the office, and I estimated that at least a thousand men were waiting to pay their subscriptions. I found Max Weiser, who was thoroughly excited and bellicose to a degree. He told me that all these men had come to join the union, so I went back to my bank and got more money. I had sufficient to pay strike benefits for some time, and I knew that when my capital ran out, a cable to Germany would replenish my coffers. By the following day about fifteen hundred dockers were on strike in New York Harbour, and a few days later not a single munition transport was being loaded. Victory was in sight, but I had reckoned without the defensive forces of American finance. At the moment when I had brought the loading in New York Harbour to a standstill, the members of my union executive were travelling in all directions. They established branches in other ports, organised meeting after meeting, and proclaimed strikes everywhere. . . .

Our success in the other ports was instantaneous. Transport after transport lay idle and could not be loaded. There arose a state of affairs which, in the



words of the American Press, cried to heaven. The newspapers began to print cables from Europe to the effect that the delay in sending explosives would be catastrophic for the Allies, and I prayed that this might really come to pass.

Naturally these successes were purely temporary. Counter-measures were most energetically started and were carried out simultaneously by the armament industry, the American Government and the opposing trade union. It was chiefly Samuel Gompers, the President of the American Federation of Labour, whose sympathies were very much in England's favour, who touched off the mines which weakened and destroyed Rintelen's organisation; in particular, hints of Rintelen's own activities were traced and the Captain himself describes how he had the feeling of being shadowed. Suspicion had been aroused against him prior to this, although he worked under four fictitious names. Some of his 'incendiary cigars' were found unexploded aboard a vessel which sailed for Marseilles instead of the Russian Arctic ports as intended. The 'cigars' were only due to explode after fifteen days, and the voyage to Marseilles did not last so long. Thus, the cause of numerous fires aboard munition ships on the high seas was traced. The *New York Times* featured a long article with a photograph of one of the 'cigars' found at Marseilles.

Moreover, an extraordinary oversight of Papen's had put the Allies on Rintelen's track.

And so Captain von Rintelen became the first victim of the 'Papen carelessness'.

For neither Captain Boy-Ed nor Papen saw to it that the new code which Rintelen had brought with him from Germany was kept in the safe custody of the Embassy at Washington. There were copies of the code not only in the possession of Boy-Ed's secretary, but also in an ordinary safe in Papen's New York office, with the firm of Amsinck. When he was in America Rintelen discovered that the English had succeeded in 'borrowing' this new code, and so had in their hands the key to all the dispatches which

went to and fro between Germany and the Embassy in America. Although Rintelen warned the two attachés immediately, they continued to communicate with Germany by means of the same code. This in itself would not have been so disastrous if at least considerations of special caution had prevailed in the telegrams themselves. But it was just this element of caution to which Papen paid no attention at all.

Rintelen, like all other officers entrusted with special missions, was known to the General Staff and the Admiralty under a special label. He was called 'B.I.2'. In this way the official German representatives in America and the officers in Berlin knew at once who was intended by 'B.I.2'. The English, however, in spite of their knowledge of the code, could not at first discover who he was. Then Papen committed the indiscretion of mentioning the name of Rintelen in one of his code messages to Berlin : it was now easy for the English to guess who 'B.I.2' was. They informed the Americans instantaneously : "'B.I.2" is Captain von Rintelen.' Picked detectives from Scotland Yard were sent to America to keep an eye on Rintelen's activities.

When Rintelen at this period was once endeavouring to see Huerta, the former Mexican President, who had then sought refuge in American territory, he immediately became aware that he was being followed by two detectives. A few days later as he was going towards his house he had an encounter which he describes thus :

One evening, as I was returning from a social function, I was walking along in evening dress to find a taxi, when a man passed me from behind with a swift step. I took no notice of him, but suddenly heard the words : 'You are being watched. Look out ! Don't wait for Huerta. He has been poisoned.'

I kept my control and followed the man with my eyes. I recognised the gait of Mr. Boniface. When I got into my taxi I was followed by a second car. Boniface was right. I was being watched. . . .

Responsibility lay heavy on my shoulders. In spite of Huerta's death I tried to get the Mexican affair going again, and I was still absorbed in my plans when, on the morning of July 6th, 1915, an attendant came to me in the breakfast-room of the New York Yacht Club and gave me a message to ring up a certain number. The Naval Attaché was at the other end of the telephone, and he asked me to meet him at a particular street corner. When I arrived he handed me a telegram, which ran as follows :

'To the Naval Attaché at the Embassy. Captain Rintelen is to be informed unobtrusively that he is under instructions to return to Germany.'

As Captain Rintelen recently informed me, his recall came about because the German Government on the basis of the reports of their official representatives in Washington were of the opinion that he was in the greatest danger. At the beginning of August 1915, once again with his Swiss passport, he embarked direct for Rotterdam aboard a Dutch vessel.

Papen had telegraphed that Rintelen had left the country.

This telegram was intercepted by the English. They now knew that Rintelen must pass near England.

On Friday, the 13th August 1915, the Dutch boat with Rintelen on board was searched by the British authorities off the English coast, and Rintelen, alias 'B.I.2.', was detained and later interned.

The chief of the British Secret Service, Admiral Sir Reginald Hall, who later became 'B.I.2's' best friend, said to him sarcastically a few days later :

'You fell into our hands through your Attaché's carelessness !'

Before Rintelen left America on the orders of his superiors, he had dutifully handed over some of his plans to Boy-Ed and von Papen. He believed that it would be possible to pursue the methods introduced by himself which

had proved so successful. For the organisation was there, and all that was necessary to carry on Rintelen's methods was the guiding hand, and the needful cash.

But his hopes were unfounded. Papen was much too busy with his own notions to pursue Rintelen's at all seriously. There was only one result of the transfer of Rintelen's activities to Papen: at a later date Rintelen's former assistants, now collaborating with Papen, were arrested by the Americans. For, after the arrest of their former chief, his assistants saw that certain documents and vouchers were not safe with them. They handed them all over to Herr von Papen for him to destroy or keep as evidence. Some of these files he took with him on his return journey to Germany, and so they fell into English hands. Some of them he had sent to Palestine a year or two later, when they likewise fell into the hands of the English. But this will be dealt with in detail later.

### *Bogus Passports*

Although Captain von Papen must have realised that the kind of sabotage carried on by Rintelen was not only much more prudent but infinitely more effective than the variety that he himself tried, either from jealousy or vanity he does not appear to have pursued it any further. He seems to have transferred his energies to another sphere. What he did here may have been successfully carried out by numerous colleagues of his in war time or peace time, without there being any cause to reproach them with it. But its first use proved to be incriminating when it was brought up as evidence. For a military attaché 'dare' do anything so long as he is not found out. But when he is caught, the taint of guilt is not confined to him alone; it touches his employers too.

Herr von Papen was forthwith accused by the American Press of issuing bogus passports with the object of enabling German nationals in America, who wished to enlist in the army or navy, to return home.

The procedure was usually this. Individual Germans

were furnished with Swiss, Dutch, Swedish, Norwegian or Danish passports, and they were official passports 'manufactured' with the assistance of German officials. Their holders were then able to set out on their journey to Germany as neutral citizens. At that period, vessels, even neutral ones, were held up on the high seas by British warships, and all German citizens of military age found aboard were seized and interned. Therefore Germans liable for military service could only accomplish their journey with the aid of these forged passports.

In the uttering of these forged passports Papen appears to have used chiefly Herr von Wedel and his wife. In the cheque book which was found in his luggage no fewer than seven cheques, totalling \$3,000, or about £700, had been made out to these two. The first five, totalling \$2,500, were for von Wedel himself, then there was one for \$300 'journey money for Wedel', and finally one for \$800 for Frau von Wedel. The British White Paper notes in reference to this :

'Herr von Wedel is believed to have been implicated in the forgery of passports in the United States of America. He would appear to have left New York in December 1914 with money provided by Captain von Papen' (Cheque 66).

In addition to this a letter was found with Papen which indicates that such forgeries, with the object of clearing for Germany nationals liable for military service, were chiefly employed at the end of 1914.

The letter read as follows :

To Captain von Papen,  
Washington.

COBLENZ,

October 31st, 1915.

DEAR SIR,

In the midst of the greatest period in the world's history may I be permitted to send you a few lines, together with my best wishes for your continued welfare.

Things are still going well with me, as I hope they are also with you, sir. The outbreak of the war found me

in America in the Argentine. My enthusiasm was such that I immediately decided to start for Germany, whatever it should cost me.

After obtaining false Swiss papers I decided to start on my journey on November 17th.

At the end of three weeks' voyage in a Swedish steamer, just at the entrance of the English Channel, we were taken into Falmouth by a British destroyer. We were held up for examination there for twelve days, including Christmas and the New Year. Our papers were found in order, and on January 2nd we were permitted to continue our voyage to Sweden and Denmark. *I may mention that a German Naval officer accompanied me.*

On the 7th January I reached my harassed Fatherland, and the joy of that day was indescribable. . . .

May I ask you, sir, to send me a few lines in answer to this letter, and will you be so kind as to address them as follows :

Carl Remsch,  
Gutschen, Post Giersdorf,  
Kr. Grottkau, Schlesien.

That is my parents' address, and I do not know yet to what regiment I shall be sent from here.

I am, etc. . . .

CARL REMSCH, Lance-corporal.

A whole host of German citizens accomplished the voyage home to Germany in the manner described in this letter. There is, however, no reliable evidence on hand to show whether, and, if so, in what measure, Papen and Herr von Wedel were concerned in this traffic.

## CHAPTER 3

### *Sheer Carelessness*

#### *Lost Dispatch-Cases*

The second six months of 1915 saw events move rapidly for Papen. One of his assistants was Dr. Albert, a Privy Councillor to the German Government. This man was before the war German Commissioner for the Brussels Exhibition, and during the war a buyer for the German Government in the United States. When English and French propaganda in America became too disagreeable for Germany Dr. Albert was called in. He had instructions to add force to German propaganda. An office was set up for him, and writers and speakers were subsidised with a two-fold object: to work up opinion against the export of munitions, and in favour of Germany.

On a very hot day in the summer of 1915, the 24th July to be precise, Dr. Albert and the well-known author and journalist, George Sylvester Viereck, were travelling in one of the Sixth Avenue elevated trains to Fiftieth Street station. Dr. Albert had a large dispatch-case with him, in which were to be found documents almost all relating to activities of the Propaganda Bureau. A few stations further on George Sylvester Viereck got out. Dr. Albert continued the journey, and immediately sank into a gentle slumber, as well he might, through the effects of the excessive heat. He awoke just as the train pulled into his station. He hastily jumped up and rushed for the door—and, once on the platform, discovered to his horror that he had forgotten his case. He had just enough time before the train went out to leap back into the compartment, but he then discovered that a man was leaving the carriage with

the case tucked under his arm. He chased after him as quickly as he could in the crush of people. At the exit to the street he almost reached him, when he noticed with a sinking heart that the man had beckoned a taxi, swung himself into it and driven off at a great speed.

Dr. Albert, still believing that it was a case of pure accident, immediately pulled all the strings he knew to regain possession of the documents. But all his attempts were quite unsuccessful.

And then he had a disagreeable surprise. On the 15th August 1915 the *New York World* published the cream of what he had in his case, among other things some very compromising letters about the purchase of American munition factories by German middlemen.

The loss of this dispatch-case was only publicly cleared up fifteen years later. In 1930 Mr. MacAdoo, the Secretary to the Treasury at the time of the incident, explained that Dr. Albert, like most other instruments of the German Government, was shadowed by a special detective. Frank Burke, the well-known American detective, was entrusted with the task of keeping a watch on Dr. Albert, and he entered the elevator with him on that July day in 1915. When he saw that Dr. Albert had fallen asleep he took possession of the documents and brought them to Mr. MacAdoo, his employer. MacAdoo was at that time known to be very friendly towards England. He at once sat down to study the papers of which Dr. Albert had been deprived, but it was only fifteen years later that he said :

‘The more I saw of them, the more I realised their immense importance.’

Much as he would have liked to see the publication of the documents undertaken by the American Government itself, this was impossible, as diplomatic relations between America and Germany were then unimpaired. And therefore, by a roundabout way, he placed the most interesting of the documents in the hands of the *New York World*, which soon saw that good use was made of them.



Their publication naturally did tremendous harm to the German cause in America, and the whole of the propaganda there had either to be discontinued or switched into fresh channels.

‘ *These Idiotic Yankees* ’

Papen could not deny himself a personal letter on the subject to his wife, who was then living in Germany.

The consequence of this letter was that Berlin was obliged to recall him immediately, at the request of the American Government.

Among the American journalists whose relations with Papen were very close was one James J. F. Archibald. This man enjoyed Papen's special confidence, and when Archibald was leaving for Germany on 20th August 1915, Papen gave him this letter for his wife, which contained, among others, the following sentences :

‘ They unluckily stole from the good Albert in the Elevated, a whole thick portfolio. . . . Well ! one must after all expect things like this to happen. How splendid on the Eastern Front ! I always say to these idiotic Yankees that they should shut their mouths, or better still express their admiration for all that heroism.’

Was it stupidity, or a peculiarly unfortunate chain of accidents ? The English stumbled on James J. F. Archibald's brief-case when they searched his luggage at Falmouth. In doing so they found this letter of Papen's, and full of malicious joy they fell over themselves in their haste to cable it word for word to America.

A howl of indignation went up from the whole American Press and public. ‘ Idiotic Yankees,’ forsooth ! That then was the feeling of an official representative in America for his hosts ! Animosity against Herr von Papen became so great that a salvo of attacks was let fly at him.

His ejection would probably have followed hard on the heels of this storm, had not the Austrian Ambassador, Dr. Dumba, as *persona non grata*, been requested to quit his post at Washington.

For in the luggage of James J. F. Archibald had been found a report by Dr. Dumba too, which was made public immediately. In this report Dr. Dumba suggested to his Government 'that American foreign policy might be influenced by domestic political considerations'. Dr. Dumba had allowed himself even to go so far as to speak of 'the self-willed temperament of the President'. On account of this statement, which was a direct insult to Wilson, Dr. Dumba was officially recalled from Washington on 8th September 1915; he actually left the United States on 30th September.

As the seizure of Papen's letter, referred to above, happened in the early days of September, and its publication in the American Press followed a few days later, the American Government desired to avoid making the two cases simultaneous, and had to postpone Papen's recall for a few weeks.

*'Persona non grata'*

At the end of November the storm broke over Papen's head. The *Providence Journal*, whose publisher, Rathom, was strongly pro-British, brought out a series of articles against Franz von Papen, the German Military Attaché. They were an effusion of all the resentment which the American public had stored up over a period of some months. Though the 'idiotic Yankees' remark was the real reason for his recall, it was not desired, for obvious reasons, to pillory him for that, and the *Providence Journal* brought forward three accusations against von Papen and Boy-Ed.

(1) 'Passport frauds.' The paper added : 'It is significant here that the Government has taken the statement of an admitted liar.'

(2) 'That Captain Boy-Ed engaged in a plot to furnish the Government of the United States with false affidavits in reference to Great Britain obtaining supplies from the United States.'

(3) 'That Captain Boy-Ed and Captain von Papen met

Huerta several times in New York, and practically framed the so-called Huerta plot.'

In a letter written by N. Lindheim (on 4th December 1915) to Oswald Garrison Villard, a former American Ambassador in Berlin, defending von Papen, he stated: 'The charges against von Papen are the "Huerta plot", the storage of arms in New York City and his connection with von Rintelen.'

Papen's recall as *persona non grata* was demanded by Lansing, the American Secretary of State, on 3rd December 1915. The German Government, which by this time was properly tired of von Papen's activities in America, made no more special endeavours to keep him and Captain Boy-Ed (who was simultaneously declared *persona non grata*) at their posts.

The storage of arms referred to in Lindheim's letter was connected with Papen's activities in relation to the Bridgeport Projectile Company. This company, on the orders of Papen and Boy-Ed, had as a 'precautionary measure' piled up very important dumps of shells in New York and New York Harbour, and this state of affairs became a real menace to the city.

The actual reasons for Papen's recall were, as mentioned, his insulting references to the American nation, his connection with Huerta, arising from his Mexican days, various acts of sabotage (which were only proved some time later) and his clumsy business relations with the Bridgeport Projectile Company.

As the feeling of German nationals in America was already very rancorous towards the 'Yankees', Papen's slighting reference to Americans was at once enthusiastically received by them. But opinion against Papen had hardened appreciably in America a few months later, when it was discovered that in his luggage there was a letter dated 21st December 1915 from an important merchant named Reinhold Siedenburger, which added fresh fuel to the fire. The relevant portion of this letter ran: 'For the extraordinary idiotic Yankee antagonism, you will readily console

yourself with the good German proverb : " The greater the enemy, the greater the honour " '. ( "*mehr Feind, mehr Ehr !* " )

Barely three weeks after notice of his recall Papen left New York. The German and American Governments had seen to it that Papen and Boy-Ed were accorded a safe conduct by the English, French and Russians. This, however, merely referred to their persons. Whilst Boy-Ed, before setting out, had prudently hidden or destroyed all papers which could have possibly incriminated himself and others, Papen could not resist taking a large part of his papers and documents with him on the journey. He did this chiefly because he had the feeling that Berlin was highly dissatisfied with his activities in America. He wanted to show what he had accomplished, and how far his tentacles had stretched. He had also a number of letters protesting loyalty to him, which had been written à propos of his recall, from his friends, in particular Dr. Albert.

### *Falmouth*

Lulled into a sense of false security by the safe conduct accorded his person, Herr von Papen, brisk and cheerful, started on his return journey to Germany by way of England two days before Christmas 1915. As he was still in the diplomatic service, it naturally did not occur to the English to touch his person. But in view of the fact that they were at war with Germany they could not use the same consideration with regard to his luggage ; it was handled and searched. With incomprehensible carelessness Papen had not reckoned with this, for all along he had believed that the German Government could do something to prevent the English from daring to meddle with his baggage.

But the English took the risk. On the 2nd January 1916, when von Papen passed the coast of England, his ship was taken into Falmouth. He was treated with extreme

courtesy, no obstacle was placed in the way of his continuing his journey, he was not detained a moment longer than necessary, but—his luggage was brought to London and there searched most minutely. A number of extremely important and incriminating documents were removed and not returned to him.

For the official representative of an enemy power to give himself away like this is very compromising indeed. The British Government did not underestimate the value of this gift from the gods, they even found it worth while to print a White Paper devoted exclusively to the subject of these documents and cheques.

This was damning for Papen. For it supplied definite proof that he lied when he declared that he had no connection with Werner Horn, who was convicted for the Vanceboro Bridge affair. The documents showed Herr von Papen's connection with an army of spies and saboteurs, and they gave proof of his payments to Herr von Wedel. A number of documents printed in earlier chapters come from the dossier which was seized on 2nd January 1916.

Thus far the papers served to illumine merely the dark activities of Papen himself. No less calamitous to his loyal assistants were the repercussions arising from the discovery of cheques and counterfoils in his portfolios. By means of this cheque-book, which held as many as one hundred and ninety-six cheques, some forty true-hearted German patriots in America who had put their trust in him were handed over to the hangman or thrown into prison. In any event, all whose names appeared in Papen's cheque-book were taken to internment camps after the publication of the documents and the entry of America into the war against Germany.

#### *One Hundred and Ninety-Six Counterfoils*

The British White Paper specially selects from the hundred and ninety-six cheques a few which were considered of the greatest importance and interest to the British public. Here are some extracts from it :

'Cheque No. 22 : \$200 for Mr. Bridgeman Taylor : this person came over to England to offer himself for work under his Majesty's Government. His real name is von der Goltz and he is now in England.

'Cheques Nos. 24 and 35 (\$300 and \$200), Caserta, Ottawa : this man repeatedly tried to enter the service of his Majesty's Government. He is now interned in England.

'Cheque No. 85 : this cheque shows that payment of a hundred dollars was made to Kuepferle, probably the German spy who committed suicide in July, in England.

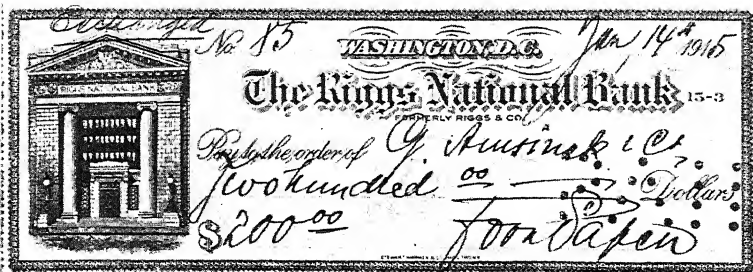
'Cheque No. 125, for German Consulate, Seattle, dated the 11th May, for Schulenburg. A dynamite explosion in Seattle Harbour took place on the 30th May 1915.

'Cheque No. 96, for Dum-dum investigation.

'Cheque No. 145, made payable to Tauscher, Krupp's agent. The counterfoil refers to "picric acid".

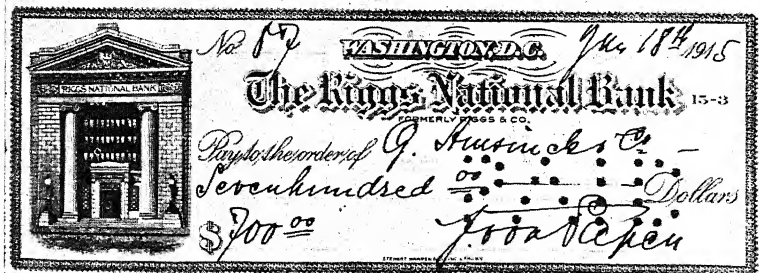
Naturally special attention is called in this series to cheques for Werner Horn. But for political reasons the British Government in this White Paper did not publish, nor even once mention, quite a quantity of cheques which were secretly handed over to the American Government and later on played their part in specific cases. Thus in the trials of Captain von Rintelen in New York, in 1917 and 1918, a cheque for \$10,000 was produced, bearing von Papen's signature. This was made out to Dr. Scheele, the chemist, who in his time had been the inventor of the 'incendiary cigar'. This cheque served as principal evidence not only of Rintelen's connection with Papen, but also of the payment of large sums of money for damage to American, French and English property. Once again, therefore, Herr von Rintelen had to thank Papen for the special attention with which he had collected incriminating material for him : it cost Rintelen six years of his life in internment camps and prisons under most galling conditions.

But to return to the White Paper, it is established that the British Government also kept back a quantity of evidence of acts of sabotage carried out in America with Papen's co-operation. This evidence was later used to support



Bal. Brought forth Deposits.		No. 85 Jan 14 1915 Order of <i>G. Ausimack &amp; Co.</i> ( <i>Amplified \$100</i> )
Less Ch. No.		
Carried forth.		<i>\$200.00</i>

No. 87.



Bal. Brought forth Deposits.		No. 87 Jan 18 1915 Order of <i>G. Ausimack &amp; Co.</i> ( <i>for Horn</i> )
Less Ch. No.		
Carried forth.		<i>\$200.00</i>

TWO OF THE CHEQUES AND COUNTERFOILS FOUND IN PAPER'S LUGGAGE IN JANUARY, 1916.

American claims for compensation for damaged American property.

Among the numerous names in the cheque-book, which cannot all be recounted here in detail, a few of the more important may be mentioned. Papen's two immediate secretaries, Georg von Skal and W. von Igel, who managed his New York office with the firm of Amsinck, received from him monthly payments of \$100 to \$200. Captain Hans Tauscher, Krupp's representative in America, is singled out for six fairly large cheques. Inspector Koenig looked after Papen's so-called 'Secret Service' and he was the manager of the Atlas Line, a subsidiary company of the Hamburg-Amerika Line. His name appears on the counterfoils of eight cheques, some very large, which had been payment for various services rendered. The German consulate in Seattle received sums several times greater, up to \$1,300, because Dr. Bopp, the consul-general in Seattle, looked after a subordinate organisation for sabotage. Individual cheques were made out to 'War Intelligence Service'; against cheque No. 107 is the note 'Karl Schurz, Lawyer's bill for Schurz, Pratt, Oberwager'. Here Papen had been obliged to step in to provide the necessary funds for the defence of three of his assistants who had to answer for their actions. The names of Theo R. Lanke, Schurz and Ryan appear several times, without any special mention being made of the object of the payments.

The majority of the cheques are drawn on the firm of Amsinck & Co. The British White Paper does not stop at an itemised list, it also gives photographs of the most important cheques and counterfoils, in which the hand-writing and signature of Herr von Papen are everywhere clearly recognisable.

### *Valuations*

As early as the end of 1915, before the seizure of the papers, Count Haugwitz, a captain on the German General Staff, presented a secret report on Herr von Papen to his superiors in which he stated: 'After such inexplicable



occurrences the General Staff has no further employment for von Papen, and he must report to Reserve Infantry Regiment No. 93 as unfit for General Staff.'

Papen was not even detailed to his old hereditary Uhlan regiment, but to a modest Reserve Infantry unit.

When the State Prosecutor in the Rintelen trial at New York produced Papen's cheque-book he remarked: 'This is a cheque-book which was formerly in the possession of Captain Papen, then German Military Attaché in Washington. He appears to have had a mania for preserving all his cheque-books, and he had the brilliant idea of taking them with him to Germany, when he was recalled at the request of the United States Government as being no longer *persona grata*. You may be of the opinion that it was an unfriendly act on the part of the English to extract these cheque-books from his diplomatic luggage.'

And Rintelen himself remarks in the same connection: 'I was certainly of the opinion that it was an unfriendly act on the part of the English to confiscate, as the Attorney suggested, but my mind was dominated by the unshakable conviction that Captain Papen, in failing to destroy it, had perpetrated a blunder of such stupendous idiocy that he would never be able to atone for it as long as he lived.'

Buchheit, one of Papen's German biographers, estimates the losses suffered by America through Papen at about a milliard dollars. He naturally does not add that it was mostly damage which in no way benefited the German cause. In fact, a lawsuit which was brought against Germany by the Americans on account of damage wrought by Herr von Papen has been in progress from 1924 to the present day.

For, on the evidence of his confiscated papers, outrages were laid to Papen's charge which only occurred long after his departure from the United States. One of them, the destruction of 'Black Tom', a pier in New York Harbour, most certainly appears to have been traceable to the plans of Rintelen. On the other hand, it is a matter of dispute to this very day whether the destruction of the Kingsland

Plant by an explosion was due to the activity of German agents. 'Black Tom' was a large pier built out into the water in the shape of a gigantic head and neck ; hence its name. It belonged to the Lehigh Valley Railroad Company, and was covered with sheds, railway track, docks and warehouses. The export of arms and munitions to the Allies had been carried out largely from this pier. On the night of 30th July 1916, seven months after Papen's departure, the whole of 'Black Tom' was blown up, and a vast number of people lost their lives. The damage caused by this explosion, which the Americans put down to the German saboteurs, ran into more than eleven million dollars according to American estimates.

The explosion at the Kingsland Plant happened on 11th January 1917. Almost the whole factory, which produced munitions and materials of war for the Allies, went up, lock, stock and barrel. Here, likewise, numerous lives were lost. The Germans immediately declared that there was no question of any agents of theirs being involved in this ; it was one of those industrial disasters which can so easily happen in munition factories without the assistance of saboteurs. In spite of this, these two cases, 'Black Tom' and Kingsland, were both ascribed to Papen's activities, or alternatively to the preparation by him of a sabotage organisation. It was declared that both affairs had been carried out by his agents after his departure, but that they had both originated in his brain. The sequel to these accusations against Papen himself and against Germany will be dealt with in the next chapter but one.

## CHAPTER 4

### *'The Clown of Three Continents'*

#### *Battles on the Western Front*

Captain von Papen returned to Germany in the early days of January 1916. He first went to Berlin with the object not only of presenting an accurate account of his efforts in America but also of protesting energetically to his Government against the treatment which had been accorded him at Falmouth. Unfortunately there are no accurate or reliable reports regarding Papen's interviews with his superiors. But it was divulged that he was extraordinarily irritated and angered at not receiving from them the recognition and praise which he believed he richly merited. Indeed, when he insisted that reprisals should be taken against the British on account of their confiscation of his papers, he even had to swallow the extremely unpleasant retort that it would have been better if he had never given them the chance of making such a haul. He was given clearly to understand that the German Government was not in a position, and desired still less, to take any steps concerning the results of his imprudence. And thus instead of an assurance of stiff counter-measures against the British, all he received was a very sharply worded rebuke for his own conduct.

Feeling extremely insulted and injured, he asked for a period of furlough in which to rest on his laurels. But the German Government had no mind to grant it to him. At that time martial law prevailed in Germany. It was not evident that Papen's post in America had been so full of worry and overwork as to warrant special leave. His request to return to his former hereditary regiment was not

even acceded to. He was immediately gazetted to an infantry regiment, and it was insisted that he should at once proceed to the front and give up any further aspirations towards 'higher service'.

But Papen at that time was unfitted for modern front-line service. The front-line troops had already had eighteen months' experience in trench warfare. Papen was merely a good horseman and dancer and it was therefore not possible to allow him even a minor infantry command. It was only after some seven months of training that he was put in command of the 2nd Battalion of Reserve Infantry Regiment No. 93. His men were actually the latest call-up, that is, third-line troops who had been hastily trained for field service. It was no picked troops that Papen had to lead.

In spite of that, the man's ambition immediately reawoke. He tried to find in the field the recognition of his services which he had not found in his position as a staff officer. But in this position—perhaps not by his fault this time—he was just as unlucky as in his previous one. One must here give him credit for being no coward. He risked his own life so far as it was worth the risking. He took part in three battles, but it seems that he did not secure the approval of his superiors; although there exists no exact evidence on this point.

The first great battle in which he took part was the Second Battle of the Somme. On the 22nd August 1916, he and his battalion withstood a British assault on the north bank of the Somme at Mouquet Farm, near Thiépval. His men suffered very heavily and their losses were enormous. The casualties were so heavy that his battalion had to be withdrawn and reinforced.

On 4th November 1916, in the Third Battle of the Somme, Papen's battalion was again engaged. No further details of his actions in this encounter are known.

Papen and his battalion came into fierce conflict with the enemy for the third time in the Easter Battle at Arras, in 1917. Once again it was the British troops who faced his

regiment. This time the British had succeeded in making a break through, nine miles wide, on the Vimy Ridge. Papen had not yet forgotten his animosity against the British, he was unsparing of his troops and his battalion was almost annihilated. Papen again and again urged his men into the line of fire where they were pitilessly mown down. He then hastened back, collected up his clerks, his orderlies and even his cooks, and tried to fill the gaps with this personnel which was really only partly trained. This of course availed him nothing. The enemy onslaught was irresistible. When the roll was called, it was evident that his battalion had suffered losses far above the average of the remaining formations. Papen himself had special luck and escaped without a scratch.

Although he proved a gallant officer his superiors, as mentioned above, did not seem to like him as an Infantry Officer on the Western Front. After Papen and his almost annihilated battalion were withdrawn from the front line and sent home for re-establishment, it was decided to transfer him to Asia Minor.

#### *Army Group 'Yildirim'*

In autumn 1917 the German High Command, at the urgent request of the Turkish Army, was about to equip two German Army Corps for Asia Minor. One of these, under General Liman von Sanders, was to make a drive from Turkey against Arabia : the other, under Falkenhayn, was to be attached to the fourth Osman Army and to advance towards the Suez Canal. By forced marches and the employment of motorised and mounted divisions both armies were intended to make the advance as unexpected and as rapid as possible. For these two armies the Turkish High Command coined the Turkish name 'Yildirim' (lightning) because by their swift attack they were to settle the situation in the Near East.

Captain von Papen and his troops were attached to this force. It was assumed that he could do less damage in the deserts of Arabia than on the American or French Front.

Far from it, Papen succeeded, even in this third continent, in sowing the same seeds of disaster.

For a start, his mere presence appears to have sufficed to give the whole expedition an unlucky send-off. For when the 'Yildirim' was assembled and equipped on the shores of the Sea of Marmara, the British succeeded, by means of agents in their secret service, in blowing up the 'Yildirim's' extensive ammunition dumps which lay at the port of Ismid. Thus the new army division was robbed of almost all its ammunition stores. The replacement of these exploded stocks was completely impossible, owing to the general scarcity of war materials among the Central Powers, apart from the difficulty of sending a fresh batch to such a remote spot.

The German and Turkish High Commands consequently decided to postpone to a later date the planned surprise drive of the 'Yildirim' corps.

Since, however, the British were just then making preparations for an attack on Turkish territory in Asia Minor, units of the German Army were left there to strengthen the Turkish forces.

Captain von Papen belonged to one of these units.

On the strength of his activities as an officer of the General Staff, he tried at first to get himself transferred to General Liman von Sanders' headquarters with the object of finding employment on the staff and not in the firing-line.

Liman von Sanders immediately sent a telegram of protest. He said he had no use for fools on his staff, and insisted that Papen should not be attached to him, but detailed as an ordinary field officer.

The 'Yildirim' division first took up a position in what is now Palestine.

### *Herr von Papen is bored*

Papen was enraged, but he had to comply with the wishes of his superior. He was forced to stay with his division in a waterless and treeless waste; instead of an office, or indeed even properly constructed quarters, this society lion

had to pitch his lonely tent in the desert. He was bored to extinction.

Placed in such a situation other men endeavour to study, to improve their education, to play cards or cultivate music. Herr von Papen, to relieve his loneliness, hit upon the idea of spinning together the threads he had picked up in American days.

When he had returned home via Falmouth, Papen had only taken with him part of his records. Some of his official papers and his notes, in particular the documents relating to the Rintelen trials which were then in progress, and his correspondence with Indian, South American and Irish conspirators, remained behind in his archives at Washington. His secretaries had seen to it that these papers were sent back to Germany by very circuitous routes. Papen had these letters and documents straightway sent to him in his tent in Palestine : they were beautifully arranged, labelled and indexed.

Before the documents, which again travelled by a devious route, came into his hands, he fell ill with typhus and dysentery. Accompanying the German corps in Asia Minor were medical units, and among them a number of Red Cross and St. John Ambulance nurses. In charge of a section of the St. John Ambulance nurses was Fräulein von Rintelen, the sister of that same Captain von Rintelen who had to thank Captain von Papen for his imprisonment. It happened that Captain von Papen, after he had fallen ill, was handed over to the very same field hospital of which Fräulein von Rintelen was in charge. He immediately told her how her brother had been one of his best assistants and dearest friends in the United States. At that time Fräulein von Rintelen had no hint of the way her brother had fallen into the hands of the British. She was therefore particularly pleased to discover among her patients an ostensible friend of her brother's. She tended him with her own hands with the utmost self-devotion, so that he should be set on his feet again with the greatest possible speed. She gave him morphia to lessen the pain, she arranged that he should

have specially good food, and saw to it that he received the best accommodation.

Papen got on so well under the friendly care of Fräulein von Rintelen that it was only with difficulty that he could bring himself to return to the solitude of his desert tent. But even the worst typhus is finally cured, and Papen had to rejoin his troops.

To comfort him he discovered in his tent that parcel of records which he had had sent after him from Washington, by way of Germany. He immediately endeavoured to pick up again some of these connections of his American days. To start with he busied himself with working out a fresh plan for an uprising in India. Whilst in America he had had relations, partly direct and partly through Dr. Bopp, the German Consul General, with some Indian students, revolutionaries. He had placed funds at their disposal and promised them adequate support if they would organise a rebellion in India against the British.

Simultaneously Papen had picked up another thread. He took up some of the addresses and recommendations which the Irish revolutionary, Sir Roger Casement, had placed at the disposal of the German Government. His object was to communicate personally with a group of Irish revolutionaries in America. An encounter between Papen and Sir Roger Casement, such as has often been described, had never taken place, because in the early days of the war Sir Roger was in Germany, whilst Papen remained in America. Papen only returned to Germany at a date when Sir Roger, with the help of German money, was endeavouring to land in Ireland with the object of conducting from there operations against England. As, however, has already been shown in the documents of the German Foreign Office of 24th January 1915 (see page 43), Sir Roger Casement had been able to make many important contributions to sabotage in America. Hence Papen's connection with a large number of Irish revolutionaries.

These then were the threads which Papen picked up once again: and there were isolated connections with South



American revolutionaries who were likewise ready with the help of German gold to start movements of revolt which would embarrass the Americans and the British. The primary idea here involved the nationals of those states which were neighbours of British and French colonies, and therefore possessed the opportunity of tying the hands of the British fighting forces by inconvenient revolutionary movements. It must be stated that these plans for the most part were truly childish, and would never have been capable of achieving any really important and practical success. But Papen has not been able to restrain himself, at any period in his life, from spinning his intrigues, and inciting people and nations against each other wherever the opportunity and wherever the slightest willingness has existed.

In practice none of the intrigues of Papen which originated at this period came to any palpable fruition, either in the United States or even in Palestine. But his joy in setting people against each other, intensified by the boredom of an aristocratic officer who had never learnt to occupy himself in solitude, once more brought a crowd of his misguided collaborators to the scaffold.

### *Flight in Pyjamas*

The activities of the German Army in Turkey were most unwelcome to the British High Command, and in the summer of 1918 a widely concerted and well-thought-out turning manœuvre was begun by a British Expeditionary Force under the leadership of General Allenby. The object was to roll up the Turkish Front and so get wide and important areas of Asia Minor into the hands of the Allies. In this way, moreover, the danger of a threat to Arabia or Egypt would be eliminated.

The advance of the British Force was carried out with such secrecy and adroitness that the German and Turkish troops were completely surprised and captured before they could think of putting themselves properly on the defensive.

Captain von Papen was aroused betimes by one of his orderlies. A few words sufficed to tell him that the British

were already in the camp. The orderly insisted that only precipitate flight could save him : all his belongings must be left behind. Papen did not need to be told twice. He fled in his pyjamas, and in this modest garb, which after all was suited to the climate, was able to save himself from the immediate grasp of the enemy. After some hardship he succeeded in making contact with the remnants of the routed Turkish and German troops. There he was equipped afresh, and was then able to return to Germany by relatively roundabout ways.\*

This event happened in the late summer of 1918.

When the British had provided for the prisoners and sorted the booty, they made closer inspection of individual tents. They naturally had no suspicion that Captain von Papen had occupied one of the finest tents in the camp. But when they explored his abode, they found to their great astonishment a number of bundles of official papers which were marvellously arranged and written, and which gave the key to numerous conspiracies going on under their very noses. Some of these movements had already been noticed by the British Secret Service, but others were unknown to them. For the second time Captain von Papen had slipped extraordinarily important material into their hands.

News of the find was immediately reported to General Allenby. The documents appeared important enough to warrant his taking them into his keeping and then passing them on to the British Government. At that time he believed that Papen himself was among the prisoners who were as yet unidentified. He therefore asked the Government what was to be done with Captain von Papen, should he be among the prisoners. Thereupon the British Govern-

\* Some sources mention that it was Freiherr Joachim von Ribbentrop, the later German Foreign Minister, who saved Papen's life in Palestine. This is wrong. Ribbentrop has never been in Asia Minor. It is just as untrue to say that Ribbentrop acted as saboteur in collaboration with Papen in 1915 in the United States of America. Papen, in fact, did not make Ribbentrop's acquaintance until 1929, and then in Germany.

ment cabled back : 'Don't send him to prison, but a lunatic asylum.'

The find in Papen's tent not only comprised all those records, documents and letters relating to Irish revolutionaries, Indian rebels and South American insurgents, as has been described above, but tragically enough there were also the missing documents relating to his stay in America. Among these were all the notes which Rintelen's assistants had handed over, as proofs, to the German military attaché in Washington at that time. It had been arranged that in case of danger arising these men were immediately to escape over the frontier into Mexico. They had handed the files regarding their activities to Papen in complete confidence ; he informed them that they would be lodged in a safer place in Germany. All these people believed therefore that any further possibility of danger to themselves had been removed. Consequently they did not leave American territory, even when the United States entered the war in the spring of 1917. After the disposal of these documents they believed they had no need to fear anything. They could certainly not have assumed that thanks to Herr von Papen these papers, making a detour by way of Turkey, would eventually fall into English hands, where they could be used as a dangerous weapon against themselves.

This new piece of carelessness on the part of von Papen found its immediate victims in the German Captains Wolpert and von Kleist, Bünz, the consul-general, Stephan Binder, the writer, and Feldmann, the bookseller. These were all brought up for trial, sentenced to long terms of imprisonment and died in the Atlanta prison in the next few years. A number of other assistants in sabotage in America had to pay the penalty of imprisonment, but they lived to see their release.

The ringleaders of the Irish and Indian revolutionary movements were executed, the others were punished by imprisonment or deportation.

In all, the boredom of Herr von Papen, and the inconsiderateness with which he had abandoned these incrimin-

ating documents, had claimed seventy victims. If one has to admit that quite a number of these men were unprincipled adventurers and semi-criminals, yet one cannot exclude the fact that there were also a number of true German patriots, who had given their services from pure unselfishness, and had to pay for this with their lives or their health and strength.

For the second time it had been demonstrated that any connection with Herr von Papen, be it ever so distant, could only bring disaster.

When Papen's flight from his tent in his night-garb and another haul from him of important documents was made known in America, the whole American Press lifted its voice in a whoop of joy. Papen had not only made a fool of himself in America, but in Europe (at Falmouth) and now in Asia too. Then it was that the American Press gave him the nickname : 'The Clown of Three Continents'.

Papen himself came to no further harm. He returned happily to Germany in an officers' train. The situation in Germany was so precarious that the possibility of collapse at any moment had to be reckoned with. The occurrences in Palestine were only known to a small circle.

In any case, the disrespect shown by the American Press in naming him a clown of international renown did nothing to injure his later career.

Otherwise how would it have been possible for Herr von Papen not only to be appointed German Reichschancellor but even finally Hitler's ambassador in that very land, Turkey, where he had displayed his genius for clowning to best advantage?

## CHAPTER 5

### *The Bill is Presented*

#### *American Claims*

With the close of the war Papen's 'heroic period' was practically ended. But the repercussions of his calamitous activities continued to reverberate through the years. Even to this day the bill which the Americans presented for his 'heroic deeds' has not been settled.

Immediately after the conclusion of the Treaty of Versailles, a parliamentary commission of investigation was set up by the Social Democratic Government of Germany which concerned itself with the origins of the war, the mistakes of the German politicians and military leaders and with the preliminaries to the collapse. Among other points this committee of investigation had to deal with the origins of the entry of the United States into the World War, and naturally enough they came upon the records of the activities of Count Bernstorff and Captains von Papen and Boy-Ed. All three were summoned before the committee. They testified on oath that they could in no way be held responsible for the acts of sabotage, that they never had any sort of connection with Herr von Rintelen and could in no way be held responsible for America's intervention in the War. Captain von Rintelen, who was still serving his sentence in Atlanta jail in North America, sent energetic telegrams of protest via both the American and Swiss Governments. But all they availed him was that after his return to Germany in 1921 he was similarly summoned by the parliamentary committee. Just as the three official representatives had done, he too explained his activities, and after all had the satisfaction of having

them approved in retrospect, and of being appropriately decorated.

Two years after this quasi-formal conclusion of the investigation into the first few years of the war there arrived, surprisingly enough, a note from the American Government. This was a demand on the German Government in the shape of a claim for compensation amounting to forty million dollars for damage caused to property of the American nation during the years 1914-17 by the activities of Papen, Rintelen and their agents. These demands not only included official figures for the destruction of 'Black Tom', the explosion at the Kingsland works and for other effective acts of sabotage, but also all damage which had been suffered by American citizens privately through loss of life, health or property.

International lawsuits of this kind, which involve lengthy preliminaries, writs and counterwrits, summonses and evidence, always extend, naturally enough, over a long period of time. It is to be anticipated that, even now, after sixteen years, the so-called 'American claims' are still not finally settled. But in the course of the years which have passed in the negotiations over this question Herr von Papen once again had the opportunity of acting a very characteristic part. For he declared on oath, and even signed this declaration with his own hand, that he knew nothing of these acts of sabotage and the resultant damage, etc., in America, and that he had never had a hand in it.

This statement was made at the end of 1927, after an attempt by the German authorities to rid themselves of this uncomfortable business by refusing to face the facts. When, however, the Americans declined to have their claims put aside so lightly, Dr. Gauss, the chief of the legal department of the German Foreign Ministry (who since then has obtained a special position of confidence under Hitler, in working out for him artful and crooked agreements), hit upon the idea of giving the American authorities a knock-out blow by declarations on oath. He demanded of Count Bernstorff, von Papen, Boy-Ed and Rintelen that they

them approved in retrospect, and of being appropriately decorated.

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should make the relevant declarations, and was convinced that the American Government would take these declarations as proof. Rintelen refused. But Bernstorff, Papen and Boy-Ed complied with the demand without more ado. Bernstorff and Boy-Ed could do this without misgiving, for they had not actually been involved in the affair. On the other hand Papen knew, when he gave his word, that contrary to his statement and deposition he had had a very great deal to do with sabotage. It was another instance of his time-serving and his recklessness. They wished him to take an oath. He did. He did not stop to consider that this was perjury, and that in certain circumstances it would be easy to prove this perjury against him.

Most assuredly he did not know then what an enormous amount of incriminating material had been handed over to the Americans by the British. Anyone else, before deciding on such a course, would at least have travelled to America to see what exactly was the evidence against him. But this Papen dared not do, for he knew how much the Americans loved him. Even so he might at least have sent his lawyer. This too he omitted to do. With unruffled equanimity he simply swore that he had nothing at all to do with any of the charges.

It was naturally more than disagreeable when, as a counterblast, the Americans produced their evidence, and were able to establish that Papen's name occurred in connection with numerous acts of sabotage. The material concerned was some, as we have mentioned, which had not been published by the British in their White Paper about Papen. Either he had forgotten that they had taken other material from him, or, in his usual way, he had treated the whole affair lightly and relied on certain facts remaining hidden, covered, as he thought, with the dust of ten years.

It was naturally a very considerable blow to the German Government when it came out that in consequence of Papen's carelessness his testimony was useless to them and in fact put them at a disadvantage.

Now the wearisome negotiations were recommenced with



a view to settling a sum for the American claims which might be acceptable to both parties. For this purpose a mixed commission was set up, to which the Americans and the Germans each sent a representative. These two members elected an American judge to preside over them as 'arbitrator'—and then year after year the lengthy negotiations dragged on.

In the spring of 1939, when the danger of an award had come unpleasantly close, the Hitler Government recalled the German representative on the commission. When in spite of the request of the American Government no new representative was appointed, an award was announced by the two remaining American members of the truncated commission. This was in the early summer of 1939. This provided that the German Government was to pay the sum of twenty million dollars for war damage caused to Americans by acts of sabotage.

The German Government, however, did not recognise this award, for they declared that without the presence of a German delegate the decision was contrary to the terms of the agreement. So this decision also became the subject of dispute. In the same way the German Government refused to recognise a decision of The Hague arbitrator because it was against Germany. So this lawsuit, a result of the Papen affair, still drags on to this day, and the end is not yet in sight.

At the end of the war, Herr von Papen had been appointed a major on the Reserve. He quitted the army following the collapse; the prospects there were not too bright; in any case he was not in the least personally affected. No one dreamed of making him personally responsible for the damage he had done the Reich by his official actions. (If they had, even his by no means inconsiderable fortune would hardly have sufficed to pay for it.) Consequently he could regard the development of events untroubled, in spite of the fact that this new burden on the Reich was a direct result of his unprincipled folly.

The whole of this episode is referred to here merely for

the sake of completeness. The only harm it has done has been to the finances of the Reich. By way of exception it has involved no one personally. For Papen himself it had no consequences : surprising but true. Unprejudiced by the lengthy negotiations over the claims, he was able to complete his transition from his 'heroic period' to his 'period of statesmanship'.

## SECOND PART

### CHANCELLOR OF THE GERMAN REICH

#### CHAPTER 6

#### *The Unknown Politician*

##### *Twelve Years' Holiday*

Between Herr von Papen's 'heroic period' and his 'period of statesmanship' there are twelve years—from 1919 to 1931. For Papen these twelve years were practically one long holiday. Not perhaps a holiday in the sense that he was obliged to rest after the exertions of his heroic deeds, but the holiday of a rich man, a great landed proprietor and a director of industrial companies. From the patrimony which he inherited and from the dowry which came from his father-in-law he had interests in numerous industrial concerns, salt-works and estates, though not much actual knowledge and experience of their management. Occasionally (not too frequently) he attended board meetings, now and again visited his domains, but was wary of interfering too much, for if he did his efforts might result in blunders. Naturally he had his own pursuits: plenty of society, hunting, racing, the theatre. He bought for himself the title of papal chamberlain, and amused himself in the Zentrum Party as a provincial deputy. His chief hobby, however, was an active interest in the 'Herrenklub' and its somewhat mystical journal *Der Ring*.

In Germany these twelve years were, it is true, full ones: there were strivings towards the re-establishment of the Reich, the reconstruction of industry, and the removal of the heaviest burdens of the Versailles Treaty; but, relatively

speaking, they were quiet and peaceful. No eruptions of the kind which the World War had brought with it disturbed this slowly rising development. At the head of things in the Reich, and in the posts immediately below, were sober-minded, hard-working men; Papen was just the opposite. In Germany at the period of the Weimar Republic there was no room for adventurers of Papen's stamp. Only when the world economic crisis, the collapse of the German banking system and the blustering thrust of revolutionary National Socialism shook the foundations of the Republic, when evolution suddenly gave place to eruption, did the time come for a figure of Papen's type. As in 1918 he suddenly vanished into oblivion: so now, as a completely unknown politician, he was as quickly thrust into the limelight again. Konrad Heiden, that excellent critic of German history, in his book *Geburt des Dritten Reiches* ('Birth of the Third Reich') characterises Papen very properly in the following way: 'He is a passionate amateur, but not very fortunate in his coquettings with politics: when he speaks one has the feeling that a rather small man is standing on tip-toe. For his political blunders he should be held less responsible than the men who after his years of political unimportance dragged him forcibly from his obscurity.'

Now this did not happen so forcibly. For 'Fränzchen', as Papen was disrespectfully called by his critics, even in these twelve years, and especially in the last of them, had intrigued widely, and sought by every means possible to play once more an influential part. But before the outbreak of this new unrest the responsible men in Germany had been careful to see that the representatives of the German Reich really stood for something. And this could be said neither of Papen nor of his successor Hitler. It was only, therefore, when any normal way out of the crisis seemed impossible that the hour of these two men arrived.

It is unfortunately impossible to divorce Papen's history from that of the German Reich in those decisive years of 1931-4. The developments of these years are too deeply

bound up with the person of this great intriguer. However much one may attempt in the following pages to make the figure of Papen stand out clear and solid from the crowded events of the time, yet it is unfortunately impossible to avoid, in the parallel development of an individual and the Reich, a short description of the political and economic background of these years in Central Europe.

In contrast to the majority of the other retired officers of the Reich, Papen after the collapse was in no sense deprived of a livelihood. For his rank and his disastrously unfortunate diplomatic career never served him as a source of income. They were merely properties in which he could play his various parts. The loss of his position, the collapse of the German currency, the French occupation of the Rhineland, the struggle in the Ruhr, none of these things was capable of tampering in any way with the secure riches of Papen. His possessions lay in France, Belgium, Luxemburg as much as in Germany itself: the land and the soil were not devalued; industrial undertakings worked with increased capacity after the armistice, and directors and managers saw to it that Herr von Papen could consume his more than adequate substance in quiet enjoyment.

It was a matter of course that a director and owner of large estates could not regard his numerous united companies from a specially democratic or social point of view, in spite of the tendency ruling in Germany at that time. All his life Papen has been an enemy of the working classes and an arch conservative. His upbringing had been strictly Catholic, and he was a papal chamberlain; consequently in Germany at that time there was but one party which he could join, the Catholic Zentrum. Unfortunately the Zentrum was one of the chief props of the democratic Weimar coalition: and until 1932 the allies of the Zentrum were the various liberal parties and Social Democrats. Because of his religion Papen was obliged to belong to the Zentrum Party, but because of his conservatism and his 'junker mentality' he objected to union with parties of

the Left, and consequently was in opposition to the party leaders. This did not stop him, for he is true to type, from later standing as Zentrum candidate for the Prussian Diet, where he finally got a seat as a completely unknown deputy.

But since he found no adequate recognition in the Zentrum Party, and since he was seeking a platform for self-glorification, soon after the war, to relieve his boredom he joined the 'Herrenklub' with its eccentrically run journal *Der Ring*.

### *The 'Herrenklub'*

As early as 1919 Adolf Hitler had felt an urge to bring about a revival of German power by way of a national awakening: a number of Junkers and conservatives from east of the Elbe had, after like deliberation, attempted the revival of Germany in a semi-mystical fashion.

In June 1919 a 'Juniklub 1919' had been formed by Heinrich, Freiherr von der Gleichen, and Dr. Werner Schotte. It was the work and ultimate aim of this club to unite a number of conservative politicians, great landowners, industrialists and aristocrats in a super-party community, with the object of influencing policy and parties and assisting the old principles of conservatism to prevail over the modern tendencies of liberalism and socialism.

Parallel with this 'Juniklub 1919', out of which arose five years later the 'Herrenklub', Heinrich, Freiherr von der Gleichen, endeavoured to create a mystical union which he called 'Der Ring'. This Ring was supposed to have a kind of magic influence over its members. Whoever was included in the 'Ring' had to consecrate blood and possessions, money and activity to somewhat nebulous ends. The 'Ring' and its members was governed by its own secret code of laws, employing black and white balls. Alliances and conspiracies were hatched and everything was tricked out with cheap mysticism and eccentric symbols.

This was the thing for Franz von Papen, intrigue in the guise of mysticism. He was not only one of the founders

of the 'Juniklub 1919' and of the subsequent 'Herrenklub' but also, naturally, of the 'Ring'.

Dr. Werner Schotte, one of the originators of this idea, describes it thus: 'This Ring is a symbol—the symbol of union. Heinrich, Freiherr von der Gleichen, has always had a very powerful feeling for the mystic force of symbols. It is chiefly thanks to him that the symbol of the Ring once again has this mystic force. Since Gleichen spoke of the Ring, Rings have sprung up everywhere: the High School Ring in the German Mode [*Hochschulring deutscher Art*], Ring of German Women, etc., etc. But the Ring of which Gleichen originally spoke was not an organisation, it was merely a mystic activity among those who found themselves after the revolution bound together in a common cause. Then came the impulse to organise; out of this first arose the "Ring of the Thousand" formed by me [Dr. Werner Schotte], a free gathering of similar-minded persons, who pledged themselves in the Ruhr struggle; this later became one with the "Herrenklub".'

But the 'Ring' was not so idealistic nor so mystic as Dr. Werner Schotte sought to make out. For from it came putschists such as Kapp and Ehrhardt, or at least they were supported by it. In the struggle in the Ruhr the organisation, as Schotte himself admits, played an adequate part in resisting the French. The object was, and remained, the struggle against the French on the one hand and against the Left on the other. The members of the 'Ring' had an extraordinarily lofty conception of their work and aims. And the results? Apart from a few amateurish and unsuccessful attempts, practically none at all. How could it be otherwise if Herr von Papen was involved? After a short while the 'Ring' faded out prosaically enough. Herr von Gleichen formed an eccentric political journal, *Der Ring*, which had originally been called *Das Gewissen* (conscience), and made it the semi-official organ of the Herrenklub.

This journal, and the Herrenklub too, must be treated in somewhat greater detail, because they were the platform from which Herr von Papen undermined the position

of Dr. Brüning, the Reichschancellor, and engineered the destruction of the Weimar Republic.

Werner Schotte remarks of Papen : ' Papen was one of the earliest and most active members of the Herrenklub, and as a conservative he felt himself bound up with the symbol of the ' Ring '. In the ' Ring ', as also in addresses which he delivered at the Herrenklub, he has outlined his policy.'

As already mentioned, the Herrenklub had its finger in various *putschen* and *coups de main* while it was still called the ' Juniklub 1919 '. The founder of the club himself describes its functions and aims thus : ' The Herrenklub gathered its members together with the intention of making the conservative connections among them effective in the political field. *It claims to be representative of a conservative upper class in Germany.* With the utmost scrupulousness it avoids taking up a ' collective ' attitude in the political field. The Herrenklub is political but it has no political axe to grind. Its presence is due to politics, but it does not function politically. It addresses itself to the political responsibility of its members, but the action arising out of this responsibility is their affair.

' Thus the Herrenklub united members of widely differing party complexion. It pays no heed to differences of faith. It expects nothing more from its members than the Christian conservative principles of a man who feels himself responsible to God for his nation.'

It is obvious even from these few sentences that, not only was the language of the ' Ring ' extraordinarily exalted, but also that an attempt was made to give to an assembly which was concerned with higher politics the appearance of being politically irresponsible and devoted to intangible and nebulous aims.

Elsewhere, however, the objects are expressed somewhat more clearly. Thus : ' *The idea of an assembly. (in club form) of the responsible upper class* has been present for years in the mind of the co-founders, Werner Schotte and Herr von der Gleichen, who have been associated politically since 1921.'



The club was to be organised on English lines and was intended to spread abroad beyond the frontiers of Germany the news that in this land too there was something other than parties. Finally, in 1924, it succeeded in widening its circle under the leadership of Count Hans Bode von Alvensleben-Neugattersleben, by the inclusion of sympathisers from Eastern Germany who had already played a part in the November crisis of 1923. The landed nobility had been predominant in the beginnings of the club. As the years went by, more and more new members had been acquired from all the professional classes. But chiefly the work of the club had been extended by the formation of subsidiary clubs everywhere in the Reich. There was a Silesian Herrenklub, a North-West Saxon Herrenklub in Leipzig, a Herrenklub in Magdeburg, a Harz and Thuringian Herrengesellschaft, a Middle Rhine Herrenklub at Godesberg and a Stuttgart Herrenrunde : all these joined the old East Prussian and Pomeranian connections. In Cologne, Düsseldorf, Essen, Hanover and Osnabrück similar circles were formed. Mecklenburg had its own Herrengesellschaft. National clubs infiltrated into social clubs in Hamburg, Augsburg and Dresden. The great work of this gathering of the upper classes was thus promisingly begun.

Although the club was extraordinarily proud of its titled members and business magnates, between 1924 and 1931 it had no political say at all in Germany. It was a club in the true sense of the word. Every member had his own political opinions, which were mostly in violent contrast with each other. But real politics—with the sole exception of the appointment of Herr von Papen as Reichschancellor—were carried on not only outside the club, but even in direct opposition to it.

The principal opponent of the club was the man who was Papen's predecessor as Reichschancellor : Dr. Brüning. He was a man who in any and every particular was the direct opposite of Herr von Papen. But this must be dealt with later.

*A Dream: Ambassador to Luxemburg*

That unfortunate knack which Herr von Papen had of always taking the wrong turning had led him to consider the Herrenklub as the political forum from which he could win over the German nation to his side. But in the first half of his twelve years' holiday his thoughts did not fly so high. Even if he intended to use the Herrenklub as a spring-board for his plunge into politics, at first his ambitions were more modest. He could not forget how high his reputation with the world seemed to stand when he represented his country on a diplomatic mission to the United States. To be an ambassador seemed to him in these early post-war years something most certainly worth striving for. But even here he did not aim very high. He pestered all the officials and authorities with his repeated requests—and the object was to become ambassador to Luxemburg. He was bound to this, the tiniest state in Europe, by family ties, and not only that, he had industrial interests there. The union of these two with an official status seemed to him a most ideal solution. But he could not win the Government's consent, try as he might.

As he could not fill this 'exalted' position under Ebert, the first President, who was a Social Democrat, he welcomed—and he was one of the few supporters of the Zentrum who did—the election of Hindenburg in 1925. Loyal to the Weimar coalition, the Zentrum had voted against Hindenburg and in favour of Dr. Marx in the presidential election. But Papen had set himself in open opposition to the party leadership. He had not only openly supported Hindenburg, but after his election had sent him a particularly flattering letter expressing loyalty. Hindenburg, who was exceedingly vain, set great store by Papen. Seven years later Papen was richly rewarded by a token of the Field-Marshal's generosity. At the time, however, the matter was the subject of a quarrel between Papen and the party leaders, and the result was that he was threatened with expulsion and the loss of his seat in the provincial Diet (*Landtag*). By stressing his particular devotion to the party, Papen was once more able

to save his seat, but from this episode dates the rupture between Papen and the party, and in particular between Papen and Brüning, which was later to prove so ominous for the German nation.

His desire to be ambassador to Luxemburg very soon took Papen further to the Right, because he believed that with the election of Hindenburg the rôle of Social Democracy was played out, and that the victory of the nationalist elements was in the making. At that time—the years 1925 and 1926—the National Socialist Party was at its nadir, and therefore the conservatives found themselves on the side of the Nationalists and the Junkers. As yet Papen did not dare break with the Zentrum (for fear of losing his seat in the Diet), but like the shrewd intriguer he was, he endeavoured from ambush to let fly telling shafts against his own party. *Der Ring*, the organ of the Herrenklub, was assiduously read by the members of the Herrenklub and the Herrengesellschaften, but was completely unknown to the general public. As Herr von Papen had at his disposal the means necessary to purchase a larger paper, he acquired a majority holding in *Germania*, the organ of the Zentrum Party.

### *Newspaper Magnate*

Franz von Papen became chairman of the board of directors of this one-time great Berlin daily, and thus guided its policy. He proved that he was quite unsuited to the task.

His friends on one occasion used of him the words which had once been applied to Lord Russell: 'This man would undertake the command of a frigate or an operation for cataract'. The cap does not quite fit. Papen would indeed undertake without hesitation any post or any office, even though he did not understand the first thing about it, and had had no previous acquaintance with it. But one may be sure that Papen, in contrast to Lord Russell, would refuse any office or any post in which he had no scope to ply his intrigues or to incite people against each other.

Now the game of intrigue could not be played in the pages

of *Germania*. But provocation Papen did try, and thoroughly, in this otherwise unsuccessful period. Without considering *Germania's* public, which was actually composed of supporters of the Zentrum and the Weimar coalition, Papen endeavoured to shoot his poisoned arrows against his own party from this paper, and he made Dr. Brüning his principal target. The party leaders wasted no time ; they quickly outlawed him as a '*frondeur* against the spirit of Erzberger and Dr. Wirth' (the most famous leaders of the Zentrum Party). *Germania's* readers very soon deserted when they realised that a policy was being placed before them which ran completely counter to their opinions. As Herr von Papen had money and enough to cover the ensuing losses, he continued to sun himself for a while in the rays of journalistic failure. He succeeded in an astonishingly short time in making a complete nonentity among newspapers out of the journal which had previously been ably and profitably conducted. Like the majority of the other papers, *Germania* was quickly suspended in the early days of the Hitler Government, and thus Papen's activities in this direction came to an end.

### *Dr. Brüning's Antithesis*

No one knowing both Dr. Brüning and Papen, those two members of the Zentrum, could be surprised that in later years the latter was in violent opposition to the Zentrum and its most capable representative. One can hardly imagine a greater contrast between any two people than that between these two men. Dr. Brüning was a scholar to his finger-tips, ascetic, self-sacrificing, incredibly clever and cultured, a level-headed politician, a former trade-union secretary, personally unassuming and absolutely incorruptible. Papen was a shallow adventurer, considering only his own ends and his success in the eyes of the world, unreflecting, careless, inconsiderate, conservative, an opponent of the working classes, disloyal and unscrupulous. These are the two men who, coming from one and the same party, guided in succession the destinies of the German Reich.

President von Hindenburg in the early days of Dr. Brüning's Government publicly stated that he was 'the best Reichschancellor since Bismarck'. Other German politicians too were of the same opinion. For Brüning, at a time when Germany was in ruins, succeeded in settling finally the reparations question, and in producing harmony in internal politics, the latter being something which had seldom been accomplished before his day. There is perhaps nothing which betrays the quality of Papen's political judgment so surely as the fact that he fought Brüning by every means, fair and foul, and finally overthrew him, and afterwards devoted all his resources to helping Adolf Hitler to take over the reins of power in Germany.

Dr. Heinrich Brüning, the former secretary of the German Catholic Trade Unions, had taken office in Germany in March 1930. He was a slim man, almost slight, with the face of an ascetic and the serious eyes of a man laden with a heavy weight of responsibility. More a scholar than a politician, he was very well read and cultured, fertile in imagination, but too austere to be popular, too upright and too unyielding to make many friends. Even when Brüning took over, the spectre of National Socialism was looming up very menacingly. For three whole years the industrialists had supported the National Socialist propaganda with almost unlimited resources. The S.A., the party troops of the National Socialists, had developed into a potent power-factor in the state side by side with the Reichswehr. The National Socialist Party, the mixing bowl for conservatives and Right-wing elements, was in violent opposition to Brüning, and so of course were the Communists who at that time took fourth place in the Reichstag. Behind Dr. Brüning stood his own party, the Zentrum, a comparatively small section of the Democratic Party and the German People's Party (*Volkspartei*). Although for the salvation of German industry during the world economic crisis he was compelled to pass very unpopular anti-social measures, Brüning knew how to win the support of Social Democracy. As parliament, in consequence of party schisms, was hardly a competent

assembly, Brüning had to act by means of emergency decrees which were only subsequently confirmed in the Reichstag. His two years in office were a constant struggle for power, for order and for the salvaging of industry. And he did manage completely to master these problems.

To effect a closure of reparations payments, Brüning was first obliged to produce evidence that Germany was in fact not in a position to bear the burdens laid upon her. That Germany was incapable of paying was doubted abroad, but Dr. Brüning laid almost intolerable burdens upon the nation to prove his point. Expenditure was cut down to the minimum, in some almost supernatural way he balanced the budget, the economies and privations to which he drove the nation were such as no ruler had previously dared to enforce. In this, in a double sense, he was Hitler's pace-maker. On the one hand, more and more of the population, bled white by his measures of economy, were driven into the arms of National Socialism. On the other, it was he who accustomed the German nation to that spartanism which under the Hitler régime has become the condition precedent for the re-establishment of the Reich.

In addition to this the world economic crisis dug its talons ever deeper into Germany. Factories were forced into idleness, millions of workers were dismissed. In July 1931 the Danatbank and the Dresdner Bank collapsed. Fresh dismissals, fresh restrictions, fresh economies were the sequel.

And in spite of everything, Dr. Brüning almost achieved what he had set out to do. The Entente had called the Lausanne Conference for the middle of July 1932, the object being to close the reparations account with an instalment of three milliards of marks. The proof which Dr. Brüning had given by straining to the uttermost the resources of the nation, this *non possumus* which with justice he could hold before their eyes, seemed about to banish the reparations question from the world for ever. But by one of history's terrible jests Dr. Brüning was not to enjoy as Reichschancellor the well-earned success of the winding up of reparations! This ripe fruit fell unjustly into the lap of

Papen, his successor, and this hardly a month after his appointment as Chancellor.

Brüning had even dared to ban the National Socialist S.A. Order once more reigned in the streets, and the National Socialist Party had been nipped in the bud. Papen made haste as soon as he had taken over the chancellorship to undo Brüning's good work and raise the ban.

Every discerning politician in Germany knew that the trail blazed by Brüning was the only proper way, not only to save Germany from chaos, but also to place the Republican Reich on a level footing with France and the other nations. Rapprochement with France had been promoted by Brüning with considerable success. The reverse of the picture was that the Nationalists and Communists saw that this sort of success must wreck their prospects of a revolutionary Germany as well as their pretensions to power. It was only to be expected that they should seek by every means at their disposal to overthrow Brüning, and so to cause chaos to reign in Germany—and bring with it their hour of success.

Naturally Herr von Papen, to achieve his individualist aims, joined in this move by the desperadoes. For another of his traits was his proneness to fish in troubled waters. If Papen had wanted the best for Germany then, Zentrum man and conservative as he was supposed to be, he must have supported Brüning with every ounce of his energies. But he did not; it was the best for himself that he wanted, and this he could only achieve in the absence of the true superlative. And now Brüning was an obstacle to this egoistic striving. We must deal in greater detail in the next chapter with Brüning's relations with Hindenburg and the other ruling forces in Germany. This preliminary account is necessary in order to make clear the means by which Papen waged war on Brüning, and the arguments he employed in these very critical times to overthrow him. For Brüning, as we have seen, had the support of Social Democracy, or more precisely, the Weimar coalition, whilst Papen intended utterly to destroy this coalition, and above

all Social Democracy, and to assist the extreme Right to victory.

The extracts from Franz von Papen's articles in *Der Ring* which are given below prove, however, not only the short-sightedness of this amateur politician, but also the fact that he is ever changing front to order. For in his early articles he was still harking back to his religious grounding, and favouring a Christian revival for the German nation. Even in his first speeches we shall encounter this. Shortly afterwards we find the nationalistic solution cropping up in place of religion, and finally he joins with National Socialism against the Church, which at the outset he had so enthusiastically championed.

#### *Papen's Articles in 'Der Ring'*

On the 6th October 1929 Papen published in *Der Ring* a longish essay, the gist of which is contained in the following extracts :

'The inner rebirth of Germany, and that is the basis of its outward liberation, can only succeed by way of a Christian regeneration. A "Right" opposition composed of forces like the "Nationalists", who in their fanatical attitude towards Rome show no sort of understanding of the Christian principles on which rests the relation of Catholic Germany to its state, can never be a conservative opposition.'

This was written at the end of 1929, five months before Brüning came to power. Thus at this period Papen saw the Church as the aim, the Nationalists as the destroyers. In June 1930, three months after Brüning's appointment, Papen already showed his first change of front. He wrote in *Der Ring* that the Zentrum had introduced Social Democracy into the Government, and it must now do the same with the radical Right.

On the 4th October 1931 Papen made a great speech at the general meeting of the local Agricultural Society at Dülmen, near Münster in Westphalia, which reveals his true sentiments quite clearly. He demanded a Right



wheel in politics, and this demand is already appreciably more energetic than that of a year before in his article in *Der Ring*. For he now declared: 'There are but Right and Left. Individualism or Collectivism. The Chancellor must and shall lead a national cabinet, a government or a dictatorship on a national basis. The veiled dictatorship of the Chancellor must rid itself of parliamentary trimmings.'

And in April 1932, again in *Der Ring*, he made his decisive thrust against Brüning with these words: 'In the last few months I have often said publicly that to me the greatest task of the Chief of the German State in the field of internal politics appears to lie in attracting to the state those valuable elements which are to be found in the great reservoir of the Right. Candidly I regard it as the Zentrum's task to support by every means at its disposal the formation of the truly conservative bloc which has crystallised out of the ruins of the liberal parties.'

Thus the moment Herr von Papen saw National Socialism as a rising ally he spoke no more of the Church or the Christian mission, but thought to win the support of Nationalist circles by favouring their call to power, and the destruction of the Weimar coalition.

### *Papen's 'Confession of Faith'*

The absence of the Catholic impulse in Papen's declaration brought not the Church but the Pope himself on to the stage; after all, Papen was still his chamberlain. Through the pressure of the German prelates Papen saw himself obliged to make some sort of 'confession', and this immediately before he took over the reins of power and in spite of the fact that he was in opposition to the Catholic Zentrum Party. Here he endeavoured, and his attempt was not exactly skilful, to bridge the gulf between the ruggedly opposing cliffs of clericalism and nationalism. The Catholic Church, through its bishops, had rejected the National Socialist Party on principle because, according to the National Socialist programme (point 24), the morality

and customs of the German race were placed before the dogmas of the Church, and moreover faith in race was to precede the Christian faith.

This 'confession' of Franz von Papen's, which in his vanity he caused to be circulated everywhere, ran as follows :

I confess myself a conservative Catholic, a German federalist and I shall remain loyal to these convictions as long as there is breath in my body. But I do not acknowledge the decay that will thereby befall us. I acknowledge the revival in the spirit of the German conservatives. I assert the great upthrust of the German nation, of which we are part. I see its deficiencies, its passions, its faults. But as a constructive statesman I must apply all my energies to bringing the best out of this movement. This best is the hope that the Germans will finally be freed from the appalling fetters of party. If at the end of our labour, the domination of party government, and with it internal disharmony, is not at an end, then that labour will have been in vain. I am not a party man ; it is purely the trust of our great Field-Marshal which has brought me to the position in which I stand to-day. And on this very account I feel myself doubly bound to my task. This is, at this momentous hour, to offer the hand of friendship to all forces which are constructively inclined. I feel myself a trustee for those unattached to parties, the politically homeless, who are nauseated by what previously went under the name of German politics. There is nothing more distressing than investigation into who is a nationalist and who is not. One should not judge one's own opinion by the measure of community feelings ; the only true measure is the degree of sacrifice for homeland and people of which the individual German is capable. It would be blindness to deny that the vast majority of the German nation acclaims such a sacrifice to the community as a whole.

I can therefore hardly imagine the construction of a new Reich otherwise than by the application of the conservative forces of German Catholicism, with which I feel myself particularly allied. I know how to estimate

their value and their accomplishment in the History of Germany and in her formation. But the dismemberment and the rending of the German nation into parties has brought with it a far-reaching adulteration of the conservative tendency. In chronic alliance with socialism, as in Prussia, even the political world philosophy of the Catholics must suffer obfuscation.

The party system, an illiberal concept, is not adapted to making the will of the people serviceable to the state in the way that the aim of Catholic world philosophy is. In these circumstances one must concede to a German Catholic the right of carrying on a conservative policy in a way which is different from that of the Confessional parties. For to be a statesman means to be answerable before God, before History and before one's Conscience.

This declaration of Papen's was in no way a declaration by the Government. Its intention was to convince the Church on one hand and the Nationalists on the other that they had nothing to fear from Papen. It may appear strange for a politician who is about to take up office to make a confession in this way. But anyone who had previous experience of Papen knew that his character was so unstable that this declaration was merely intended to be as purely formal as a visiting-card. Actually it was not long before he proved that this was no cry from the heart, nor did he think of making any move in the direction of his religious convictions. On the contrary. Six months later the Church and his Catholic convictions had gone the way of his best friends—they were betrayed.

But this utterance was of value in yet another direction. Most politicians when they take over the reins are so well-known and trusted by the population that every individual accurately knows what he or she may expect of the new man. Franz von Papen, however, was until May 1932 completely unknown to the general public in Germany. It must not be thought that, because in this book so many of his articles and utterances have been quoted, his activities affected the broader strata of society. The Herrenklub,

*Der Ring* and even *Germania* touched only a tiny section of the population. Papen, vain as he was, believed therefore that it was his duty by means of this confession to see to it that the whole population knew him and valued him on account of it.

How unknown Papen really was at that time is indicated by the following little episode. At the beginning of 1932 a book about Herr von Papen was offered to the largest publishing house in Berlin. The publishers, who pretty well carried a complete reference book of the leading German personalities about with them in their heads, first asked who he was. They looked up various reference books and lists, until finally they came upon the name they were looking for in the list of Prussian deputies. Whereupon they declared that Herr von Papen was far too unimportant and unknown for them to publish a book about him. This was, to repeat, at the beginning of 1932. In the interim the world has had ample opportunity of getting to know his name, and I myself had no trouble at all in making clear to my English publisher who Herr von Papen is.

When one reads the above statements of Herr von Papen one may easily get the impression that he has a wealth of ideas and that his convictions are deeply grounded. It has already been mentioned in the introduction that it is seldom if ever that these articles and speeches of his are composed by him. He had a number of assistants and secretaries who existed merely with the object of working at short sketches, articles and speeches for him. At the time of which we have been speaking he relied principally on the excellent pen and the wide knowledge of one of his best friends in the Catholic camp. This was the privy-councillor Dr. Erich Klausener, the leader of the Catholic Action, who supplied him with material. Later Klausener had to pay with his life for this work for Papen, and so did the very gifted Dr. Edgar Jung, who likewise belonged to the Catholic Action. Papen could manage to buy for himself opinions,

speeches, articles just as easily as he could purchase the majority share in a factory or a newspaper. In spite of this, for twelve whole years he remained so unknown as a politician that he had to make a declaration of faith when he came to power.

## CHAPTER 7

### *The Policy of the Unknown*

#### *Power Factors in the Reich*

In May 1932 when Papen took over the government of Germany he was the unknown politician, and at that time politics in the Reich was likewise a game with the unknown.

In the years 1930 to 1933 no fewer than ten power factors were at work in Germany, some of them with, and some against, each other. The difficulty was that the allies of one day were the bitterest enemies of the next, whilst on the other hand the most violent opponents became in a few hours the best of friends.

These ten power factors in Germany were :

The President, Field-Marshal General von Hindenburg.

The Reichswehr, represented by General von Schleicher.

The National Socialists, represented by Hitler and Strasser.

The German Nationalists, with Hugenberg at their head.

The Social Democrats.

The Provincial Governments, of which Prussia was the most powerful.

The Catholic Church, represented in Germany by the Zentrum Party.

The great industrialists.

The great landowners.

The Communists.

If the Government had at least possessed a clear majority, it could easily have worked the cross-currents to its advantage. But the two parties of the extreme Right and Left, the National Socialists and the Communists, at that time

refused to make any sort of common cause with the Government ; they wanted a totalitarian state and not a coalition. As these two sets of radicals were too strong, a reasonable parliamentary majority could only be obtained by a coalition of all other groups. Now the German Nationalists did not wish to sit on the same benches with the Social Democrats and vice versa. In consequence the leaders of the German Government had chiefly to rely on forces outside parliament. These forces were, however, not so reliable as the closely united parties. Thus it came about that forces had to be played off against each other or used as counterpoises, but that a predominating change of direction only happened as perhaps in the children's game of ' twos and threes '. To give one of the numerous examples : At the beginning of his term Dr. Brüning ruled with the support of the President, the Reichswehr, the Social Democrats, the Church, the industrialists, the Provincial Governments (which were predominantly social-democratic) and the landowners. He was, however, in sharp opposition to the National Socialists, the Communists and the German Nationalists. In course of time the President, the Reichswehr and the landowners deserted him, and for a while there was a rapprochement with the German Nationalists and even with Hitler. Finally he was overthrown by Hindenburg and Schleicher, who had once raised him to power and for a long time had supported him wholeheartedly.

In order to estimate the individual forces one must now lay hold on a definite point of time in the flow of events in these three critical years. The best date to take is the end of May 1932. This is the date when Brüning was overthrown and Papen was dragged from obscurity by General Schleicher to become Reichschancellor.

### *Hindenburg*

At this date the most important position of power was held by the old Field-Marshal General von Hindenburg, who was eighty-four years old. The German Constitution

gave the President the right of dissolving the Reichstag, of appointing governments and of interfering in every way in the policy of the Reichstag. In addition, Hindenburg, who was still revered as the leader of the German Armies in the World War, was esteemed and acknowledged by almost all circles in Germany with the sole exception of the Communists. Even the National Socialists, who rejected all other elements of authority in the Weimar Republic, respected Hindenburg, even if Dr. Goebbels in his satirical presumption did speak derogatorily of him on occasions. Hitler himself, as a former front-line soldier, had an unbounded esteem for his commander-in-chief. Even when he was a candidate opposing Hindenburg in the presidential election of 1931 he could not for weeks decide to place his name on the list as Hindenburg's opponent, and was only brought to it by a trick of Dr. Goebbels, who in a speech in the Stadium announced that Hitler had already nominated himself. It was Hitler's greatest wish to be on good terms with Hindenburg, and he actually received the highest post in the Reich only at the hands of the old President. He was always especially proud of being received by Hindenburg and treated by him as a power in the state. Moreover, there was no man in Germany who had dared to stand out against Hitler so long as Hindenburg. From him came the famous saying that he would never make Hitler Chancellor, but at best merely Postmaster-General.

Hindenburg was thus a real power in Germany, and until 1933 nothing could happen without his consent. At the outset Brüning had the full confidence and support of Hindenburg, but he aroused the suspicions of the old gentleman by causing his Labour Minister Stegerwald to work out plans for the partitioning of the over-encumbered estates in the east. Also Hindenburg took it amiss that Brüning could not prevent the nomination of Hitler as a candidate at the election of 1931. Moreover, this old man saw to it that the lofty traditions of the army were maintained in the Republic. The Defence Minister in Brüning's



cabinet was the extraordinarily able General Groener, General von Schleicher's immediate superior. At sixty years of age General Groener had married again, and five months after the wedding a child arrived which malicious tongues dubbed Nurmi (after the famous Finnish runner) because it had followed so hard upon the heels of the union.

Hindenburg found it scandalous to have ministers whose family life was the subject of witticisms. In his earlier days such a thing was never allowed to happen to his subordinate officers. He uttered his judgment of Groener, and a few days later the latter was compelled to resign. But as a result Brüning's continuance in office was hardly possible, and so did Hindenburg lend a hand in the overthrow of this Chancellor, 'the best since Bismarck'. Rumour has it, moreover, that this old man, with his eighty-four years, was no longer in full possession of his faculties, and that in the spring of 1932 signs of this decline were clearly visible. There may be more than a grain of truth in this, for otherwise it would be difficult to explain why this upright Field-Marshal should dismiss his most loyal official overnight.

### *The Reichswehr*

The second power factor in the Reich at that time was the Reichswehr; and in the Reichswehr itself General Kurt von Schleicher. One must picture the Germany of those days as a vast arena of the most savage party enmities and street fights. Almost every party had its own well-armed party troops. The National Socialists had collected in their S.A. (*Sturmabteilungen*) some six hundred thousand trained supporters. The Social Democrats, the Democrats and the Zentrum had at their disposal militarised bands passing under the name of 'Reichsbanner Schwarz-Weiss-Rot', which later changed its name to the 'Iron Front'. The German Nationalists had their private army in the Stahlhelm, and last but not least there were the Communists, who avoided high-flown names, but armed practically every one of their supporters. Daily in widely

separated places in the Reich there were clashes between these four bands. Usually the National Socialist S.A. and the Stahlhelm worked hand in glove, whereas the Reichsbanner Schwarz-Weiss-Rot had to defend itself on two fronts, against the National Socialists and likewise against the Communists. Daily there were dead and wounded. And the only body which was available in the Reich for the maintenance of order was the army, the Reichswehr, one hundred thousand strong and excellently trained and equipped. Thus when it came to weighing up party against party, the Reichswehr was the deciding factor; and no Government in Germany dared to remain in office without its assistance. For the Reichswehr had not only military potency, but was also a power in the political arena. Among other things, a number of active politicians had come from the Reichswehr, for instance, General von Seeckt, General Groener, General von Epp, Captain Röhm, and lastly and most important, General von Schleicher.

### *Schleicher*

General Kurt von Schleicher plays quite a special part in the life of Franz von Papen. This man, whom the Germans called nothing less than 'The Arch Intriguer', made Papen Chancellor and overthrew him just as he had raised Brüning to power and dropped him again. Much in Schleicher's character resembles that of Papen. To a certain extent he too was an adventurer, but principally an intriguer. Yet Schleicher in contrast to Papen was properly trained, not only a capable officer, but also a politician with ideas. He was a man who knew excellently well how to make use of all the weaknesses and vanity of his co-operators, who pursued an object which he had once set before himself with a stubbornness worthy of admiration. He was on good terms with all parties and was the official liaison officer between the army and Parliament, and so between the army and the parties. In his relatively young days his superiors had realised the talent in this officer. On the strength of a report on political defence questions



GENERAL VON SCHLEICHER AND HIS WIFE.  
They were shot by the Gestapo on June 30, 1934.

he soon entered the Ministry of Defence and became the right hand of Groener, the Minister of Defence. Groener had every confidence in Schleicher, gave him a free hand and loved him as if he were his own son. The only result was that in the spring of 1932 Schleicher himself engineered Groener's downfall in order to take his place as Minister of Defence. For a full five years, 1928-32, Kurt von Schleicher was the great wire-puller behind the scenes. He chose chancellors arbitrarily. The burden of outward responsibility was to rest on the chancellors, whilst he himself ruled the scenes from the wings, and made other individuals responsible for governing according to his ideas. Konrad Heiden says somewhere that Schleicher dragged Papen from obscurity, because he wanted a dull fellow through whom he could govern invisibly. In this he underestimated Papen's ambition and likewise his capacity for unscrupulous intrigue.

Thus in 1932 two intriguers were collaborating in the most important positions in the German Reich. At first they played into each other's hands, but afterwards they became the more bitter opponents on that account.

Schleicher had brought Brüning to power in order to prepare through him a dictatorship of the Reichswehr. But Brüning was too strong, too honourable, too methodical in his own plans, and too democratic to fall into Schleicher's trap. Out of initial friendship and support arose a deep-rooted hatred, which in the end brought about Brüning's downfall.

The same thing repeated itself in the case of Franz von Papen. He was Schleicher's puppet, but in the course of his antics he made some false moves, which did not please his master. Schleicher overthrew Papen just as he had overthrown Brüning ; but this time he had assistance of the National Socialists, or rather of Röhm, their Chief of Staff.

#### *N.S.D.A.P.*

And here yet a third power factor makes its appearance. At the time of which we are speaking this one only took

third place behind Hindenburg and the Reichswehr (i.e. Schleicher): this was the National Socialist German Workers' Party (*die nationalsozialistische deutsche Arbeiterpartei*, N.S.D.A.P.). Three men were then at the head of the party. They were: Hitler as its leader, Strasser in charge of the parliamentary section, and Captain Ernst Röhm as the all-powerful lord of six hundred thousand S.A. men. (Adolf Hitler was not able then, nor had he ever been able at any previous time, to enter the Reichstag as a deputy, because as an Austrian he was not entitled to stand as a candidate in the German Reich. Consequently he could not take over the formal political leadership. Only through his shady appointment as a policeman in the little Thuringian town of Hildburghausen did Hitler as an 'official of the German State' (*deutscher Staatsbeamter*) become a German citizen. This appointment was made by the first National Socialist minister, Dr. Frick. Hitler's first candidature was characteristically enough not as deputy, but as President of the Reich.)

The National Socialist Party, which for years had been underestimated and jeered at in Germany, had on 14th September 1931 won a fantastic election victory. One hundred and seven deputies were returned to the Reichstag. Even at that time the party was striving for full powers in the state, especially as Hitler, in the presidential election against Hindenburg, had obtained more than thirteen million votes. But because, in spite of this, the National Socialist Party did not at first have an absolute majority of votes, it had to be content with disintegrating the Weimar Republic, commanding the streets with the S.A. and negotiating with the Reichswehr behind the scenes. As Röhm, the Chief of Staff, had come from the Reichswehr, and was bound to Schleicher by old ties of friendship, it was not very difficult for them to hatch their plots together.

On 14th April 1932, the Chancellor Dr. Brüning had banned the too-powerful S.A. His successful negotiations for a solution of the reparations question, the negotiations for an understanding with France, the restoration of order

in German finances, were all thorns in the flesh of the N.S.D.A.P.

For this party of disintegration feared nothing more than the return of peaceful and orderly relations in the German Reich. Thereby the party would have lost its demagogic catchwords, its millions of supporters and its claims to power. Thus it was only natural that Röhm could easily come to an understanding with Schleicher to overthrow Brüning.

The introduction of Herr von Papen as candidate, a proposal which was made to Röhm by Schleicher, was not unpleasing to the National Socialists. Hitler, Strasser and Röhm also believed that this unknown and inexperienced politician would be a plaything for the forces of the Reichswehr and the N.S.D.A.P.

Until this date the N.S.D.A.P. had unconditionally fought with all its resources against every German Government. National Socialism believed that only in opposition could it come to the top in a state shaken to its foundations by an economic crisis. For every measure for the creation of order must take its toll of victims, and consequently be unpopular. Every one of these measures could therefore be profitably ridiculed by the National Socialist Party, and played off against the Government. This was the more easy at that time because the National Socialists had not yet to fear that they themselves would have to take over the Government.

Now, however, the unusual happened. In a memorable conference of Schleicher and Röhm with Hindenburg's son, Colonel Oskar von Hindenburg, Röhm made a declaration on behalf of his party. This was that, in the event of Dr. Brüning's fall, the National Socialists would support a Papen Government.

This practically decided Dr. Brüning's fate. All that was to be done now was to await the appropriate moment for formally wrecking the cabinet of the last democratic chancellor of the German Reich.

*The Social Democrats*

Peculiarly enough, Social Democracy was one of the strongest props of the Brüning Government. I say peculiarly enough, because in the summer of 1930 it had been eliminated from the Government's coalition, and also because the effects of Brüning's curative measures were bound to be felt most forcibly by the masses, that is the proletariat. Until the summer of 1932 the Social Democrats were the most powerful party in the Reichstag. They were indeed formally forced into a show of opposition by the Brüning Government of the Centre, but they 'tolerated' the system and supported Brüning, not only in the Reichstag, but also through the provincial assemblies. For the Social Democrats, who had in other respects made many mistakes in Germany, were in no doubt not merely that Brüning's policy was the only proper one in the interests of the general populace but also that Brüning represented a stout bulwark against reaction from the Right.

In contrast with their position in the Reich itself, in the provinces the Social Democrats had in many cases an absolute majority, and consequently governed. Especially was this the case in Prussia, the greatest of the provinces. Prussia comprised no less than two-thirds of the whole area of the Reich.

The Prime Minister of Prussia at that time was the Social Democrat Braun, and Karl Severing was the Minister of the Interior. Thus the Social Democrats had control of the police in Prussia, which in company with the Reichswehr formed quite a respectable body for keeping order. As the Prussian Government had to exercise very important functions of administration in double harness with the Reich Government, the formal support accorded Dr. Brüning by the Social Democrats was in no way to be underrated.

Unfortunately Social Democracy was inwardly decayed at this time. Its leadership in the two-fronted battle against the National Socialists and the Communists was not so courageous as one would have expected. One of the main points was that the 'Reichsbanner Schwarz-Weiss-Rot'

was by no means so well drilled in a military sense as the S.A. There were many National Socialists and Communists in the factories, so that in the circumstances the general strike seemed likely to be a two-edged weapon in the hands of Social Democracy.

The leaders of the Social Democrats were well aware of these weaknesses, which seriously crippled their power of decisive action. Moreover, it must be said in their favour that they had a great sense of responsibility and did not wish to enter the fight with the inconsiderateness, and the will to destruction, of their radical opponents on the Right and the Left. This caused much irresolution and indecision. Moreover, at that time the revolutionary spirit was completely lacking in Social Democracy. It considered itself strangely enough as a kind of middle class, flanked to right and left by revolutionary groups. Through their years of domination, first in the Reich and then in Prussia, they considered that their task should be more the preservation of the state than its destruction. They had everything to lose by a revolution and hardly anything to gain. Consequently German Social Democracy applied itself to defence instead of to attack, and since it was irresolutely instead of heroically led, it was forced to succumb to the first energetic onslaught. This was why Social Democracy in Germany, although unbroken parliamentarily, and until then the party with the greatest number of Reichstag seats, was on the down grade and as a power factor only to be ranked, at best, in the fourth place.

### *Hugenberg*

Likewise on the down grade, but for very different reasons, was the power factor of the German Nationalists, led by Privy Councillor Hugenberg. A mighty fellow he was, this Hanoverian district president, who dared—the first man in republican Germany to do so—to defend the interests of the Prussian Junkers and the great landowners and industrialists as a ‘national man’. Alfred Hugenberg, gifted and energetic far above the average, was first an official in the



Prussian finance ministry and then, from 1909 to 1918, a general manager at Krupp's in Essen. He had played an important part in the heavy industry, and had already begun to buy up on its behalf a number of newspapers, agencies and film companies. Immediately after the end of the war, in the period of inflation, he bought up, for a relatively trifling sum, a number of other newspapers, purchased the great 'Ufa' film company which had got into financial difficulties, developed the news agency 'Telegraphenunion', to international status, and in this way became the ruler of public opinion as long as it was not Left-inclined. The largest Berlin dailies, the *Lokalanzeiger* and *Der Tag*, belonged to him, as did the great Berlin publishing house, the Scherlverlag. But Hugenberg's influence was really dominant in the provinces. Not only did he himself possess an enormous fortune, which made him one of the richest and most independent men in Germany, but also through his connections he had the great resources of the Rhine and the Ruhr concerns under his thumb. For years the hopes of conservative circles and all the nationalist elements were bound up in this man, who also had the necessary personal hardihood to seize the power in Germany when the Left-radical wave had receded.

For a decade Adolf Hitler, who had risen from among the dregs of the people, regarded Alfred Hugenberg as the great god who dwelt in the heights, from whence he caused the gold of the heavy industries to pour down in an inexhaustible stream. In the beginning Hugenberg whole-heartedly despised Hitler and the National Socialist movement, and later he began to hate them. Finally this 'sly fox', as Hugenberg was called, made the mistake of allying himself with Hitler. From this moment Hugenberg's influence waned, for he was deceived by Hitler, just like all the others who have ever made common cause with him.

The union of Hugenberg and his German Nationalist Party with Hitler and the National Socialists was dictated by their common fight against Brüning. The final consequences of the rigorous curative and economising measures

of Dr. Brüning were the withdrawal of the support given him by the large industrialists and landowners. On the 11th October 1931, in the little spa of Harzburg in the province of Brunswick, then under the Government of the Right, a great gathering of all the clans of the National Socialists and the German Nationalists took place. Hugenberg and Hitler, Seldte and Duesterberg (the leaders of the Stahlhelm), there agreed to set up a common Right front against Brüning. In German history this has been given the name of the 'Harzburg Front'. At this gathering in Harzburg a declaration was published, the gist of which was that 'the National Front, united in its parties, leagues and groups, and animated by the desire to act unitedly and with common aims, demands the immediate resignation of the Governments of Brüning and Braun'.

Nevertheless, it was very clear at this meeting that Hugenberg was no longer the god he had been to Hitler in earlier years; for Hitler refused to take part in the general parade of the armed bands. This was not only a distinct affront to Hugenberg, but also militated considerably against the effectiveness of the Harzburg declarations.

### *The Remaining Power Factors*

Apart from the factors already dealt with, the remaining forces often played a decisive part in one question or another. They were however only concerned to a minor degree in the immediate destinies of Germany and the Government.

At that time the Church had, relatively speaking, a large say, because as a Zentrum man Dr. Brüning was in constant contact with the bishops. Papen, too, acknowledged the Catholic Church, but with Brüning's overthrow the influence of the Catholic prelates was practically broken, and the clerical party could only win occasional successes behind the scenes. This was understandable, for Protestantism most certainly played a considerable part in German affairs. The moment that the Zentrum, the actual party of the Centre in Germany and the focus of Catholic elements, was

eliminated, Protestant Prussianism made rapid headway and in a few months had driven Catholic influence right to the wall.

It was much the same with the great industrialists and landowners. As we have already mentioned, Brüning was even compelled in his last few months in office to carry through various measures and laws which called for a considerable sacrifice from the propertied classes. The industrialists suffered from Brüning's last turn of the screw where taxes were concerned. As Brüning had been a product of the working-class movement his reform of taxation was aimed to hit the propertied classes most hardly, and this was taken very much amiss by the great industrialists. This was also the reason why Hugenberg sought an alliance with Hitler in order to overthrow him.

The landowners had at the outset been pampered by Brüning. By means of the so-called 'Osthilfe' (help for the east), an act for the disencumbrance of the East Prussian landowners, millions and millions of marks from the state coffers had found their way into the pockets of the Junkers. President von Hindenburg himself and the whole Junker class gave Brüning corresponding support in return for this measure. But later Brüning was forced to realise that in spite of this generous 'Osthilfe' the completely rotten and badly managed agricultural undertakings in the East were incurable. Moreover, immense sums had illegally disappeared in the execution of his measures. He therefore gave his consent to the plans of Stegerwald his Minister of Labour, which were that this encumbered property was to be broken up for the benefit of the smallholding settlers. As we have noted above, this plan did not please Hindenburg at all. The landowners persuaded him that Brüning wished to convert 'Bolshevist plans' into fact. The opposition of the great landowning class to Brüning's cabinet made itself most strongly felt at the end of 1931, and naturally enough it contributed to the undermining of his position.

*Outsiders : The Communists*

In spite of their growing internal organisation, the Communists were in quite a different category.

The headquarters of the German Communist Party were nominally in Berlin but actually in Moscow. For, loyal to the communist principle that all movements for world revolution must be directed by the Komintern at Moscow, the German Communist leaders had to apply to Moscow for consent to every step they took. As is the general rule in such cases, the forces which were situated outside Germany did not accurately see what was afoot there.

And at that time, just as it is to-day, Moscow's point of view was that the time for communist domination in Germany was not ripe. Moscow wished to bring Hitler and National Socialism to power in order to raise the Red Flag over Germany after the collapse of the Third Reich.

Economic distress was driving millions into the arms of the Communist Party. At the election of November 1932 the Communists received 100 seats in the Reichstag. But they did not wish to gather these votes in order to take over reins of power in the state. Their object was to keep up violent opposition, to prevent the formation of any reasonable government, to increase internal difficulties and to prepare the soil for communism. No one in the German Communist Party at that time thought of a putsch. This naturally did not prevent the National Socialists from advertising the danger of communist attempts at revolution. On the one hand this gave them an obvious opportunity to develop the S.A. accordingly, and on the other hand they preferred to be lauded as 'the saviours of the State' from Bolshevism, than to be pilloried as putschists. This argument was finally produced by the National Socialists over the affair of the Reichstag fire. For as the Communists were not thinking of a putsch, something of the sort had to be staged by the National Socialists themselves in order to serve as an excuse for their subsequent deeds of violence.

The Communists had thus to be reckoned as a power factor. But only as a negative one. There was no reason

to consider them where political decisions and governmental changes were concerned.

### *Germany's Burdens*

A rational government of Germany was hardly possible any longer. This was not only because politics had to be carried on in secrecy and by intrigue owing to the confusion of political forces ; but also because every government saw itself faced by burdens, some of which were due to international conditions and magnified the internal disharmony ; while others, starting from within, intensified difficulties in foreign relations. These burdens were :

Reparations,  
The World Economic Crisis,  
Strained relations with France.

The attempt to solve the reparations question by the Dawes and Young loans was a mere piece of self-deception. Germany made its payments from loans which it had obtained from abroad ; the Allies thus had first to raise the money for the reparations themselves. But Germany, through the loans and the interest on them, was storing up fresh burdens for the future. It thus only meant a postponement of payments (or repayments) to a later date. Moreover, before Brüning's time the date of the final payment had never been fixed. Thus the danger existed that, apart from the current burden which had to be brought into the budget, other unacknowledged payments would have to be made as soon as Germany's financial position warranted it. This not only prevented any reasonable budget policy, but also courted just those solutions which would prevent German finances from shaping themselves too favourably.

Brüning was the first chancellor who with inflexible honesty took the trouble to balance the German Budget. And at the same time he succeeded in convincing the Western Powers—by the very honesty of his efforts—that only a settlement of the reparations question could

restore economic order, and with it political harmony, in Germany.

Conditions precedent were the uniting of all the economic forces in Germany, the balancing of the budget and the conclusive establishment of Germany's incapacity for payment. When this was done Brüning, after long negotiations with the creditor states, was able to get their word that at the next Lausanne Conference (June 1932) the whole of Germany's reparations liabilities would be considered settled by a final instalment of three milliards of marks. As mentioned above, Brüning could not reap the glory of this great success, because he was overthrown at the end of May. Although Papen, as Brüning's successor, signed the Lausanne Treaty, the contemporary world was sufficiently just to pay its tribute of recognition not to Papen but to Brüning. At least this was true of foreign contemporaries and the initiated in Germany itself. With the masses Papen certainly sought to make of it a great success for the policy of his Government. But even the German people at that date no longer had a proper understanding of the reparations question.

The final solution of the reparations question would probably have been reached by Brüning much earlier had not the blizzard of the world economic crisis descended upon Germany with particular violence precisely in the year 1931.

### *The World Economic Crisis*

In March 1930, right at the beginning of Brüning's Government, the first indications of the world economic crisis were recognisable in the Reich. Enormous losses, caused by the collapse of speculation in Wall Street, took place on all the Stock Exchanges of the world, and not least in Germany. German industry had to limit its production from week to week, the unemployment figures soared. But the German banks still held out, currency was maintained.

Then in March 1931 Dr. Curtius, Brüning's Foreign Minister, in company with Schober, the Austrian Foreign Minister, hit upon the idea of urging a customs-union

between Austria and Germany in order in this way to enlarge the economic unit, to increase the market and once more to produce freedom of movement between the two countries. In this plan France saw an attempt to realise, by way of economics, the *Anschluss* between Austria and Germany. And not only did she reject it under threat of vigorous reprisals, but lent still greater force to this rejection by inflicting a kind of economic boycott on Austria and Germany.

By reason of the economic crisis the Austrian Credit-Anstalt had fallen into difficulties over payments. Baron Louis Rothschild, the president of this bank, had turned to the French and English members of his family to prevent the collapse of this, the largest bank in Central Europe, by means of assistance from international finance. The French Government flatly refused; they could allow no sort of help to be vouchsafed by France. A few days later, on 13th May 1931, the Credit-Anstalt collapsed.

Western capitalism was extremely disturbed. Within the next few months credits to the extent of milliards and milliards, which America, England, Holland, France and Switzerland had in Central Europe, were recalled. From Germany alone, in the summer of 1931, some six to seven milliards of marks (about £600,000,000 sterling) were withdrawn. Even the strong German banks could not stand this.

The summer of 1931 was only half-way through when the Danatbank and the Dresdner Bank, the two most powerful banking institutions in Germany, had to close their doors and approach the German Government for help. This help was vouchsafed them. State capital was pumped into these and other banks just as it had been into the Austrian Credit-Anstalt. But milliards of the public money were lost. More industrial undertakings had to put up their shutters, the purchasing power of the population sank to an extremely low level, and in Germany alone between seven and eight million unemployed on relief burdened the state and the remainder of the working population.

Currency in Germany and Austria, in Czechoslovakia and Hungary, in Poland and the Balkan States had to be propped. Foreign exchange restrictions were introduced. The Stock Exchanges in almost all the Central European States were shut for weeks, and the complete collapse of the capitalist system in Central Europe appeared imminent. A form of state capitalism was abroad which appeared to make a reasonable recovery impossible. Yet it was then, thanks chiefly to Dr. Brüning, that a successful attempt was made to bring order into this economic chaos, and to devise at least the beginnings of a state supervision of private enterprise. But it was only a natural consequence of these very drastic measures that the growth of radicalism among the masses became rapid. It was then that the catchword was coined that the National Socialist Party was the 'Muck Magnet'; it attracted all discontent and rottenness to itself. The National Socialists promised, free of all liability, a heaven upon earth if only the masses would follow them. They promised, and this was their trump card, that they would tear the Versailles Treaty to tatters, and then there would be no more reparations payments, and no longer any economic crisis.

Now when the National Socialists came to power the Versailles Treaty was actually torn to pieces, but the economic situation of Germany has not improved a jot since 1932: it has deteriorated. And the National Socialists had every cause to be specially thankful to Brüning, for it was he who by that time (for other reasons, it is true, and in a much less acute form) had already educated the nation to economy and spartan habits.

At that date, however, the rancorous demagoguery of the National Socialists was merely producing increasing difficulties for Brüning in the field of foreign relations. For France could not and would not conclude far-reaching agreements with Brüning while in the background stood the ever-present menace of National Socialism, making illusory any treaty for more than the briefest term of years. France appreciated to the full the wide scope of Dr. Brüning's



policy : generally speaking the relations between the two countries were somewhat less strained. But an atmosphere of real confidence between them could not arise for the reasons referred to, and it was this confidence alone which could have alleviated Germany's internal political difficulties. Thus cause and effect were intermingled : foreign policy was made more difficult by the internal situation and home policy by foreign relations.

### *Brüning's Fall*

In spite of all these difficulties Brüning had kept his position for two years. In May 1932 when his overthrow had already been prepared by his opponents, the clouds even began to lift a little. Brüning himself had the impression that success was within his reach.

Through all the twenty-six difficult months of his government he had always renounced personal popularity. Bearing the brunt of personal slights and cheap demagogic tactics, he had merely sought to carry through the measures which were necessary in the interest of the community as a whole, and to secure a real and gradual recovery. And it was the sacrifice of his own popularity to the aim which he had placed before him which finally caused his premature downfall.

Brüning's dismissal by Hindenburg happened so suddenly that even the initiated could not fathom what had gone on behind the scenes. It was to be traced back to this one fact : that Hindenburg had been systematically incited against Brüning by General von Schleicher, Herr von Papen and the East Elbe Junkers.

The reasons were these. On the evidence of gravely incriminating documents which had been placed before him by Severing, the Prussian Minister of the Interior (a Social Democrat), Brüning had banned the S.A. on the 14th April 1932. At that time German justice was already very strongly under the influence of the National Socialists, and the public prosecutor did not find the documents revealed by Severing sufficiently incriminating to support proceed-

ings against the S.A. for treason, either as applying to the Reich or to Prussia. Hindenburg did not go deeply enough into the motives which activated this decision, but he felt that Brüning had laid him open to personal attack because he had persuaded him to sign the decree for the dissolution of the S.A.

Added to this was Hindenburg's personal irritation over Groener, the Minister of Defence, and his untimely produced son.

Moreover, immediately prior to Brüning's dismissal, Hindenburg had spent some weeks on his estate of Neudeck in East Prussia. His friends there, the landowners east of the Elbe, made use of this opportunity to convince him that Brüning's Minister of Labour, Stegerwald, wished to cut up their estates into smallholdings. Hindenburg, the owner of Neudeck, felt that he was menaced on his own property.

Brüning knew that Hindenburg was out of humour with him. The President returned to Berlin on 29th May 1932, and Brüning called to see him immediately. He wished to clear up all misunderstandings, principally those over the necessity for the ban on the S.A., and the recommendation of the splitting up of the encumbered estates. But Hindenburg hardly let him get a word in. He had caused his questions to Brüning to be set down on small scraps of paper in large writing, and he laboriously read them out. One of these notes ran: 'You are said to have ministers with Bolshevik ideas in your cabinet.' This was of Stegerwald, a staunch Zentrum man. Before Brüning could give his explanation Hindenburg was overtired, and closed the discussion; Brüning was to call the next day. On this occasion Hindenburg stated that Brüning certainly had not given any cause for complaint previously, and if he would resign the chancellorship he could perhaps be included in the next cabinet as Foreign Minister.

This was too much for Brüning; he was no limpet. With the words 'I too have my name and my honour' he left Hindenburg's room.

Schleicher, Papen and the Junkers had won. By their intrigues not only had the best chancellor since Bismarck been overthrown, but the German nation had been guided on to the steep road which was to lead to the precipice.

This was on 30th May 1932.

## CHAPTER 8

### *Papen takes over the Government*

#### *Hitler promises Support*

On the 31st May 1932 the new Government under Papen was formed. This happened with a rapidity so unusual in German affairs, that it was immediately clear even to the uninitiated that Brüning's downfall had been absolutely counted upon, and that consequently the new Government had been surreptitiously settled long before.

This agrees fully with the facts. For the foundations of the new Papen Government had been laid on the 8th May. On that day Captain Röhm, as Hitler's representative, had promised Hindenburg's son, Colonel Hindenburg, and Meissner, the Secretary of State who was attached to the President personally and enjoyed his strictest confidence, that Hitler would support a Papen Government.

Immediately after this interview General von Schleicher joined Herr von Papen to work out a list of the future ministers. Papen's relations with the leading politicians of the day were only slight. He had only the small and limited circle of the 'Ring' and the Herrenklub. It was therefore only natural that the names which he put to Schleicher were almost entirely those which bore a good reputation in the Herrenklub but which were practically unknown to the general public. Against a man here and there Schleicher raised the objection that he was too unimportant or too inexperienced to be included in the Government in those difficult times. Generally speaking, however, Schleicher declared himself in agreement with the majority of Papen's proposals so long as Papen consented to his (Schleicher's) becoming Minister of Defence, and as

such being able to exercise a decisive influence over the resolutions of the cabinet.

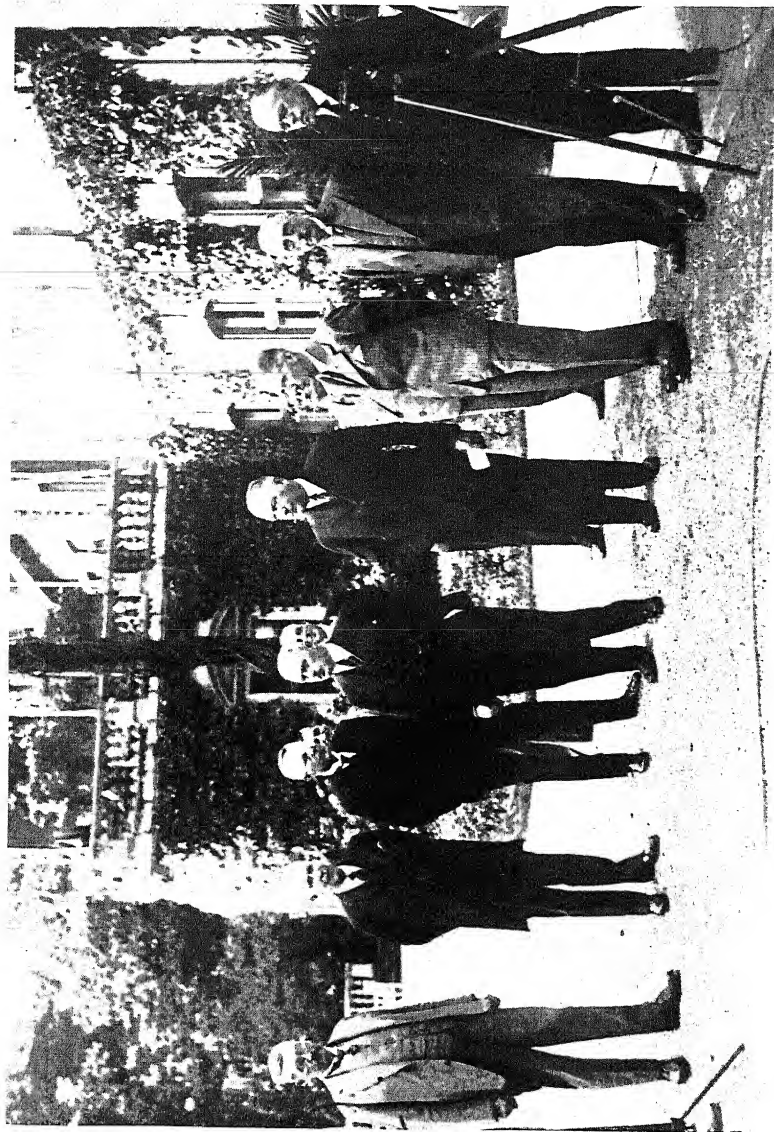
To all this Papen said Amen. He had dreamt of being ambassador to Luxemburg, and now he was to have the supreme governmental post in Germany. It was so much like a fairy tale that he would have consented to any condition that Schleicher cared to impose. He wished only for power, for his name once again to be on everyone's lips.

The Papen cabinet thus presented a rather peculiar appearance, especially when one was accustomed to the democratic lists of previous governments. Of the ten ministers no fewer than eight were nobles, all ten were arch-conservatives, hide-bound capitalists and in no sense friendly to the working classes. Here is the list :

Von Papen :	Reichschancellor
Kurt von Schleicher :	Defence
Freiherr von Neurath :	Foreign Affairs
Graf Schwerin-Krosigk :	Finance
Freiherr von Gayl :	Interior
von Scheffer :	Labour
Dr. Hermann Warmbold :	Trade
Dr. Guertner :	Justice
Eltz von Rubenach :	Transport
Freiherr von Braun :	Food and Agriculture.

Of these eight titled ministers seven were from the Herrenklub circle. Only Freiherr von Neurath, who had until then been ambassador in London, was an outsider. The two other ministers, Dr. Warmbold and Dr. Guertner, Ministers for Trade and Justice respectively, were interesting, for the former was to be taken over from Brüning's cabinet, and the latter was an outspoken National Socialist. It was through these two men that Schleicher sought on the one hand to maintain the connection with the former Brüning Government, and on the other hand to pave the way for Hitler.

As soon as this list was ready, Schleicher's car raced to Meissner, who in his turn drove to Neudeck to acquaint



Kreuzer

PAPEN'S CABINET, JUNE 4, 1932.

*Left to Right* : Dr. Guertner, Freiherr Eltz von Rubenach, Count Schwein-Krosigk, Freiherr von Braun, Freiherr von Neurath, Chancellor von Papen, Freiherr von Gayl, Professor Warmbold.

the President with Schleicher's notions and this list of ministers in the cabinet to be.

Hindenburg was enthusiastic.

Meissner, who had been suitably prompted by Schleicher, reminded the President that Papen, because of his letter of congratulation to him (Hindenburg) in 1925, had been in bad odour with the party. Hindenburg from that moment had the impression that Herr von Papen was a martyr for his loyalty to the person of the Field-Marshal. Consequently nothing but good could be expected of the man. Also he was a blue-blooded aristocrat, a man of the world, with perfect manners, and a friend of the Junkers east of the Elbe. Finally there was yet another point. Papen was a Catholic. In the last few years Hindenburg had been repeatedly driven to anger because he had been accused of hostility to the Catholic Church. Now he could clearly show that, following Brüning, yet another Catholic was being appointed Reichschancellor by him.

And Hindenburg was particularly pleased to discover three genuine East Elbe Junkers in the new cabinet, namely, the old Freiherr von Gayl, Freiherr von Braun and Eltz von Rubenach.

Only one statement rang false in Hindenburg's ears : that Hitler wished to support Papen. Hindenburg's experience of the ' Bohemian corporal ' had already been far from pleasant.

But for this too Schleicher had a remedy. Through Röhm and Goebbels he caused Hitler and Goering to be summoned to Hindenburg.

Brüning's resignation was handed in at noon on the 30th May. At four o'clock on the same afternoon Hitler and Goering were with Hindenburg. The President, still somewhat incensed at Brüning's departure and his proud gesture, merely asked the two leaders of National Socialism quite shortly whether Hitler would support the Papen cabinet. In the case of an affirmative answer he would have no objections to raise to the dissolution of the Reichstag, a new election and the lifting of the ban against the S.A.

Hitler and Goering answered with a brief yes.

Hindenburg shook hands with the two National Socialists, and they took their leave. The whole interview had barely lasted three minutes, and Hitler had once more given a promise which he had decided in advance to break.

### *Papen's Broken Word*

Papen, however, showed that he was tarred with the same brush as Hitler.

For in taking over the Government he broke his word.

At that time the leader of the Zentrum was the prelate Kaas. A few days before Brüning's dismissal this man had already got wind of Papen's intention of overthrowing the chancellor and taking over the Government himself. On the morning of the 31st May, before Papen had been called to the President, Kaas entreated Herr von Papen to visit him. The latter was, be it noted, still an active member of the Zentrum, and a Prussian deputy for his party. In a very serious interview, Kaas endeavoured to make clear that, for reasons of party discipline and personal propriety, no member of the Zentrum should lead the new Government after Brüning's unwarranted and precipitate dismissal.

Herr von Papen knew that Hindenburg approved his list of ministers. Nevertheless he concurred with Kaas, and gave his word of honour that he would never, as a Zentrum deputy, form a new cabinet.

A few hours later Papen betook himself to Hindenburg and declared that he was ready to take over.

After the announcement of Papen's appointment as Reichschancellor, Kaas could not restrain himself from addressing an open letter to him in which this breach of faith was heavily underlined. To quote part of this letter word for word: 'I recollect that on the afternoon of Tuesday, the 31st May, you promised me that you would not take over office as Chancellor. At least, this is what I was obliged to assume if words are to have any meaning and declarations any value. Working on this assumption, I answered for the loyalty of your decision at a meeting of



the executive committee of the Zentrum Party. Immediately after this came the news that in deliberate violation of the promise you gave me you had decided otherwise.'

This letter was somewhat inconvenient for Papen, particularly as it went the round of all the German newspapers. But he had a ready explanation of his behaviour. He made no direct retort to Kaas, but caused a communiqué to be issued by the Reichschancellery. This said that Hindenburg had first asked him if he wished to undertake the formation of the new cabinet as a member of the Zentrum. Loyal to his declaration to Kaas, he had refused such an appointment. Hindenburg shortly afterwards had returned to his question, but this time asked him whether he would undertake the same task as a private person. Whereupon he, Papen, not in his capacity as a party member, but as a German patriot, had consented. And he added: 'Even the German Zentrum Party and the politically organised Catholicism which it embraces cannot close their eyes to the fact that the new Germany can only be built on forces which the intellectual trend of our times has made into the hope of the rising generation.'

The line of division between Papen's ideas and those of the Zentrum—and this included the Church—was fairly clearly drawn in this statement. Henceforward the Zentrum was Papen's enemy.

By petty hair-splitting Papen had disposed of a promise which in his frivolousness he had never taken seriously. This produced from the sarcastic Schleicher the classic dictum: 'In most things there has to be a certain carelessness. It has occasionally been said of Herr von Papen—"the fellow's careless". That is what is needed.'

Schleicher merely desired to use Papen as a shield: he wanted Papen to compromise himself while Schleicher ruled. And when it was once said of Schleicher that he was reckoned as the brains of the Papen Government, he capped the remark with a modest: 'Not the brains, but the will.'

Papen himself, as happy-go-lucky as usual, not only

believed that he could get over the opposition of the Zentrum, but even that he could rally the whole German nation to his standard. At all events this is strongly stressed in certain speeches which he made during the month of June.

Part of a statement by the Government made on 4th June 1932 reads thus: 'The German nation is undergoing a spiritual and material crisis which is without precedent. If it is to tread with any prospect of success the thorny path to freedom in internal and foreign affairs, the sacrifices it is called upon to make are enormous. They may only be borne if it succeeds in discovering its spiritual foundations by means of a combination of all constructive and loyal, in short all national forces.'

In an interview which he gave to Stephan Lauzanne, the correspondent of the *Petit Parisien*, at Lausanne, on 20th June of the same year, he said among other things: 'To-day I represent, what my predecessors could never say of themselves, *all* the national forces in Germany. Thus in me France has a guarantee that in the conclusion of the Franco-German agreement the *whole of Germany* signs what I shall sign. In previous attempts at rapprochement France has only met the Left. Is it not interested now to meet the Right, that is to say, the whole of Germany?'

Here we can trace a clear allusion to his rapprochement with National Socialism. A few days later, in a speech over the radio at Lausanne, he went further by stating: 'The present distress of Germany demands nothing less than the final throwing into the scale of the new united forces. It would be impossible at this juncture to lead Germany and to keep at arms' length movements which incorporate, instinctively and voluntarily, Germany's will to live.'

What caused Papen to rely so much on an alliance with the National Socialists? Well, Schleicher had been hard at work here too. A few days after Papen's appointment, the Reichswehr General had invited Adolf Hitler, the leader of the National Socialist Party, to the Fürstenburg estate in Mecklenburg. A long interview took place, in the course of which Hitler once more solemnly declared that he would

support the Papen-Schleicher Government. Schleicher had ready in his pocket Hindenburg's decree for the dissolution of the Reichstag desired by Hitler. Schleicher, moreover, bound himself to remove the ban on the S.A. within the next few days. Both measures were actually passed through by Papen and Schleicher, and Hitler could feel that he had got good value for his support of Papen.

When Hitler left Fürstenburg on that day he was in a better humour and more pleased than he had been for a long time. He already saw himself Chancellor and said to his comrades: 'A tablet must be put up on this house on which generations to come may read: Here took place the memorable interview between Adolf Hitler and General Kurt von Schleicher which resulted in . . .'

### *The Lausanne Conference*

Schleicher's agility rendered Papen's presence superfluous, in spite of the still more obscure political conditions in the Reich. Moreover, Papen had found a fresh and very competent Secretary of State for the chancellery: Herr von Planck, a personal friend of Schleicher. Herr von Planck's father was, to be sure, more famous than his son: for Professor von Planck had received the Nobel Prize for his Quantum Theory.

A fortnight after taking over the Government, Herr von Papen found himself on his way to Lausanne. There he was to receive a discharge of the reparations account. As we have already related, Brüning had done excellent spadework in this field. Papen, it is true, had a number of conferences to attend, he had to produce evidence, make speeches and strike up acquaintanceship with foreign journalists. But on 7th July 1932 the final documents were signed and Papen was able to return to Germany as a 'conqueror' after his three weeks' absence. The reparations payments were conclusively settled with a final payment of three milliards of marks.

During his brief absence from Berlin the S.A. had once more made its appearance in the streets of Germany. The

Reichstag elections were fixed for the 31st July : the National Socialist soldiery spent the full force of its fury in the streets of the German cities ; but for this brief period the uneasy peace between Hitler and the Government had held.

Although Papen's and Schleicher's first promises to Hitler had been fulfilled, he was waiting for yet a third. This was a move of the Government's of special importance to the parties of the Right, namely, the suspension of the Social Democratic Provincial Government in Prussia. The war of National Socialism on Papen and Schleicher was only to be started when this important preliminary to a final victory of the National Socialists was fulfilled.

All his life Papen had been an opponent of Social Democracy, and as a deputy in the Prussian Assembly he had been keen in his opposition to the Braun-Severing Government : he was only too willing to comply with Hitler's wishes.

### *The Destruction of the Weimar Republic*

In the second six months of 1932, shortly after his return from Lausanne, Papen was gathering himself together for his great stroke against the Weimar Constitution and against the Weimar Republic itself. This deed of his will go down in history. For it branded him as digging the grave of a system which, it is true, had shown many deficiencies and flaws, but was nevertheless a democracy of the first order. It stands out in violent contrast to the Empire, its predecessor, and its successor, the Third Reich of the National Socialists.

As we have previously stated, the Social Democratic Party was in power in Prussia. The area of this province was some two-thirds of the whole Reich. This predominance was of particular moment in Berlin, the capital of the Reich, which at that time was the source of German policy. The Government of the Reich had always been obliged to pay particular regard to the Prussian Government, and a proper reactionary course in the Reich was impossible so long as a liberal tendency was maintained in Prussia under the lead of Social Democracy.

It is true that the Social Democratic Government in Prussia was then very seriously undermined. The Stahlhelm had proposed on 9th August 1931 a plebiscite on the basis of which the Prussian Assembly was to be dissolved and Social Democracy thrust from its position of power. But in spite of an alliance with the National Socialists and the Communists, only thirty-seven per cent of the electorate expressed dissatisfaction with the Braun-Severing Government.

Then on the 24th April 1932, the election of a new Prussian Assembly took place. The National Socialists deployed their enormous forces and were able to capture thirty-six per cent of the Prussian votes and one hundred and sixty-three of the total four hundred and thirty-two seats, but they could only secure an absolute majority by joining forces with the Communists. They made use of the Communists once only. With their help they formally overthrew the Braun-Severing Government by a vote of no confidence at the first session of the new parliament. But immediately after the division they beat up the Communists and flung them out.

Braun handed in his resignation. Attempts to form out of the sharply opposed parties a Government with a working majority came to nothing. Braun was in consequence formally asked to carry on the Government without a majority. But Braun had had enough. He reported himself sick, retired to his country cottage, nominated Hirtsiefer (Zentrum) as his deputy and left the Government to him and Severing.

Although this rump Government could no longer boast of a majority in the assembly it represented a power in the state. An old German political proverb says, 'Wer Preussen hat, hat auch das Reich' (Who holds Prussia holds the Reich). This was the reason why the Social Democrats clung to this rump Government; this was the reason, too, why the enemies of Social Democracy, in particular Papen and Schleicher, desired to take over power in Prussia.

The idea of dispossessing the Social Democrats by force

would never have occurred to Brüning. But Schleicher and Papen, immediately after their assumption of power, let it be known that they were going to appoint a commissioner for Prussia. This official, as political delegate of the Reich, was to lead the Government in place of the prime minister. They were now looking for a suitable pretext to put their plans into action. One pretext was that in the long run a Government without a parliamentary majority was impossible.

The second and far more important pretext arose from the accusation against Severing that he had sought to come to terms with the Communists. Diehls, a Government councillor, and a trusted friend of Severing, had played the traitor. This man professed himself a Social Democrat ; he was in fact on the books of the National Socialists. After the defeat of the Braun Government, Severing had made an attempt to obtain a workable majority in the Prussian Assembly. He invited Torggler, the Communist leader, to a conference in order to discover the conditions under which the Communists would support the Prussian Government. Diehls, as Severing's right-hand man, was present at the interview, the result of which was entirely negative. There was really nothing that could be taken exception to in this proceeding of Severing's, because as Minister of the Interior he had just as much right to negotiate with the Communist Party as Papen and Schleicher had to have dealings with the National Socialists. Diehls followed up this parley with an immediate visit to Schleicher, informed him of the facts, and made use of the opportunity to make out that a Communist conspiracy was in train.

Thereupon Reichschancellor Papen asked Hirtsiefer, the deputy premier, Severing, the Minister of the Interior, and Dr. Klepper, the Prussian Finance Minister, to meet him at the Reichschancellery on the 20th July 1932 at ten o'clock in the morning. He informed these three ministers that as head of the Government of the German Reich he could not tolerate such negotiations in the largest Provincial Government. Consequently he saw himself obliged to dis-

miss the Prussian Government and replace it with a State Commissioner for Prussia.

The three ministers declared that this proceeding was unconstitutional and they would only bow to force. Here the interview closed without further debate, and the three ministers took their leave.

A bare two hours later, at noon to be precise, Dr. Bracht, the mayor of Essen, rattled up to the Ministry of the Interior, mounted very poetically on a motor-cycle. He made the astonished porters show him straight up to Severing. He informed Severing that he had been designated by Papen to take over the Prussian Ministry of the Interior, whilst Papen himself was the prospective Commissioner for Prussia.

Severing once more declared that he would only bow to force. Dr. Bracht then asked him what he understood by force. Severing said it must be actual physical force. Whereupon the two men, who understood each other well, indulged in a little comic interlude while they discussed the embodiment of this 'force'. Dr. Bracht intended to return with the police that evening and take Severing into custody.

### *The Capitulation of Social Democracy*

Severing immediately informed the Party Committee. A general meeting of the leaders of the German Social Democrats, the Trade Unions and the Reichsbanner Schwarz-Weiss-Rot was called up for the early afternoon. It was to take place at the premises of the General German Trade Union Club. The agenda was to decide on an attitude towards this coup of Papen's.

The German Social Democratic Party was at this time anything but revolutionary. Therefore the Party Committee said to themselves that it was far better to have this unknown and apparently innocuous Papen in Prussia as State Commissioner, than to bring the hordes of National Socialist mercenaries on to the scene by resistance with violence. One could be sure that Hitler would interpret resistance on the part of the Social Democrats and the Reichsbanner, and probably even a general strike of the

organised working classes on the Social Democrats' side, as 'an attempted Red putsch', and immediately make his appearance in the streets with his armed S.A. The Reichstag elections were eleven days off, and the Social Democrats were expecting successes. Armed resistance would not only have upset the elections, but in certain events might even have caused their postponement. Since the Social Democrats had already spent a great deal of money on propaganda they did not want to risk this. After quite a long debate these and other less important considerations induced the meeting to decide to offer no forcible resistance to state interference but simply to submit to the dissolution of the Prussian Government.

The 20th July 1932 ! This would have been a day for Social Democracy to prove that it was still loyal to its great traditions, and that for thirteen long years its troops, the Reichsbanner, had not been drilled in vain. But it was not to be. The leaders of German Social Democracy were, it is true, to some extent outmanœuvred ; but in fact the inertia of office had taken too deep root in them, and they were too little disposed for fighting to give the order for opposition by force of arms. They capitulated.

At eight o'clock in the evening Dr. Bracht with Melcher, a police superintendent, and three policemen appeared in Severing's office. Severing received them. But when Melcher, a former chief of police at Essen, made to shake hands with Severing, the latter drew back. Dr. Bracht immediately vouchsafed the information that Severing was dismissed. Shrugging his shoulders, the Minister of the Interior said that he yielded to force and went into his private room, which was next to the office. In this extremely prosaic and unromantic fashion the stronghold of Social Democracy had fallen.

The removal of Severing, which was accompanied by the arrest of the Social Democratic police officials in Berlin, made hardly any impression on the mass of the working class. The only effect was perhaps that propaganda for the elections for the 31st July was carried on with increased



intensity because the Social Democrats hoped to recover their lost position by an election victory.

*The Reichstag Elections, 31st July 1932*

But this hope proved a vain one. The bloodless relinquishment of their advantage in Prussia had convinced the masses that the Social Democrats were no longer suitable representatives. The consequence was a considerable flight of the electorate from the Social Democrats to the National Socialists and Communists. The elections of the 31st July produced an overwhelming victory for the National Socialists. They more than doubled the numbers of their mandates. The National Socialist votes amounted to thirteen and three-quarter million. The party obtained two hundred and thirty seats as opposed to one hundred and seven in the preceding elections. The Social Democrats, it is true, took second place with one hundred and thirty-three, but they had lost ten seats. The Communists had advanced to third place with eighty-nine seats, while the Zentrum (excluding the twenty-one seats of the Bavarian National Party) came only fourth with seventy-six seats.\* The German Nationalists had lost heavily to the National Socialists and only succeeded in holding thirty-seven seats. The three radical parties—the National Socialists, the Social Democrats and the Communists—together held four hundred and fifty-two seats, all the remaining parties had only one hundred and fifty-six of the total six hundred and eight seats in the Reichstag.

A rearrangement of the mandates such as had occurred called for the immediate resignation of the Papen Government. For the best parliamentary traditions, which are not confined to Germany, have it that a Government must be offered to the leader of the strongest party. The strongest party in this case was the National Socialist Party.

Hindenburg, now as ever, had no desire to appoint the 'Bohemian corporal' German Reichschancellor. In the

\* Actually the Zentrum Party could be considered as holding ninety-seven seats, because the Bavarian National Party always voted with them.

two months of Papen's Government he had become still more attached to him and did not wish to divorce himself from his 'cabinet of Barons'. Consequently the Hindenburg camarilla put forward the idea of proposing to Hitler a reorganisation of Papen's cabinet, with the inclusion of one or two of Hitler's henchmen, and so avoiding a complete change of course. At all events, Papen did not hand in his resignation, and had he done so Hindenburg would not have accepted it.

## CHAPTER 9

### *Hitler versus Papen*

#### *The Führer breaks his Word*

Hitler had expressly promised to support Papen's Government. He had given his word to Schleicher and to the President himself. Since then Papen had fulfilled all Hitler's wishes. Therefore the Führer, in his usual fashion, no longer saw any reason for keeping his word. As he subsequently explained in answer to a relevant accusation of Hindenburg's, his promise to Papen was only valid until the elections. Hitler broke faith with Hindenburg and Schleicher as cold-bloodedly as he had done previously with the Bavarian Government, and as he was to do again with Austria, Czechoslovakia and England.

What was the reason for his sudden change of front over Papen? It was this. Hitler had promised the masses that following an election victory he would take over the Government. He had considered it certain that Hindenburg would be forced to appoint him Chancellor if the National Socialists were the largest party in the Reichstag. When this did not happen he simply lost patience and started a ruthless war on Papen.

In the election fight which had preceded the July elections Hitler had not been able to restrain himself from violently attacking the 'cabinet of Barons', and Papen himself in particular. But in his speeches he had conspicuously spared von Schleicher, the Minister of Defence, and had even ejected a subordinate from the party because he had ventured to oppose Schleicher in an election address. Hitler's first desire was certainly to overthrow Papen, but Schleicher he wished to retain as Minister of Defence.

About a week after the election battle, Hitler met General Schleicher at manoeuvres. The two men greeted each other cordially, and Hitler proposed another meeting on neutral ground. At this encounter Hitler explained to the Reichswehr general that he had decided to take over the Government, but that he intended to leave the Ministry of Defence with Schleicher. The National Socialists were to have the chancellorship (with himself as Chancellor), the ministries of the Interior, Justice, Agriculture, Air and Propaganda : also the posts of Premier and Minister of the Interior for Prussia were to be occupied by National Socialists. Papen was to be dropped completely.

Surprisingly enough Schleicher, who at that time was playing a very ambiguous part where Papen was concerned, did not say no. He said he would submit Hitler's proposals to the President.

Hitler was in a seventh heaven when he left Schleicher. He withdrew to Haus Wachenfeld, his ' Magic Mountain '. But the very next day he was rudely shaken from his dreams when Goering and Frick, with Funk, his economic adviser, came to him in person with the news that Schleicher had no idea of making him Chancellor, but merely wanted to compromise him in Hindenburg's eyes. On the violent impulse of the moment, so frequent with him, Hitler gave the order for instant mobilisation of the S.A. A march on Berlin was to be started, but as yet the capital was not to be entered.

Meanwhile the S.A. had given full rein to its feelings. After the election victory it had committed numberless excesses, struck down or shot its political opponents in the streets, plundered the business premises of party enemies and made arbitrary arrests. When these excesses became too gross Papen decided to take counter-measures. And so on the 9th August the Government issued an emergency decree. By this decree the death penalty was imposed not only for political murders, but also for other political crimes which had previously been punished with imprisonment.

This surprising mobilisation of the S.A. disconcerted

Schleicher too, and his good humour towards Hitler disappeared in a flash. He took Papen's side against him, and the latter was thus saved from an immediate downfall. For now Schleicher in his dealings with Hindenburg took the side, not of Hitler, but of the Papen Government. Schleicher had the confidence of Meissner, the State Secretary, Colonel Hindenburg, the President's son, and the old President himself, and so Hitler's first chance of becoming Chancellor was lost.

But Schleicher had other surprises up his sleeve for Hitler. He intended to make him look completely ridiculous, and so to put an end to the progress of the National Socialist Party. Until the 10th August Schleicher, like Papen, had petted and flattered the National Socialist Party. From that day onward there was a revulsion in his attitude. This change of front in the end cost Schleicher his life. Herr von Papen was more prudent. For a few months he too took a stand against Hitler, but he was sufficiently accommodating and unprincipled to make it up with him when the moment came.

### *Murder at Potempa*

Before we come to describe Hindenburg's contemptuous reception of Hitler, which compromised the latter in the eyes of the whole world, we must mention in its due order a bestial crime which had far-reaching political repercussions.

The National Socialist hordes, undaunted by Papen's anti-terror decree of the 9th August, had committed further deeds of violence. Among them was one of the most abominable of their crimes. In the little village of Potempa, in Upper Silesia, a few workers who were Social Democrats had stubbornly resisted the threats of the National Socialists and failed to join the party. One of these men, Pietrzuch, of Polish origin, had even refused to patronise an inn which belonged to a National Socialist. This was sufficient excuse for making an example of Potempa.

Late on the night of 11th August five S.A. men forced their way into the house of Pietrzuch's mother. This was

where the young Social Democrat lived. They threatened to beat up or shoot the whole family if Pietrzuch dared to continue in his obstinacy. Pietrzuch was already in bed and thought it best to make no reply at all to the threats of the S.A. This incensed them so thoroughly that they forthwith dragged him from his bed and stabbed him in the back with a knife. When even then he did not attempt to defend himself or escape, they threw him to the floor, and, before the eyes of his mother and sister, trampled his whole body, singling out his face and head for special attention, until his head was literally reduced to pulp.

The five National Socialist heroes then left the house. They made their way to the National Socialist inn for which they had so bravely battled, for a carouse and free beer in celebration of their victory.

Pietrzuch's relations informed the police. The five National Socialists were arrested and handed over to the special tribunal set up by the new decree. This met at Beuthen four days later, and passed the death sentence.

Until then the S.A. men had believed that crimes of this kind went unrewarded, or could at least be committed with the risk of trifling penalties of imprisonment. When the death sentence became known there was such a howl of rage from the S.A. that it was feared their troops would commit further crimes. No doubt there were methods of bringing this insubordinate soldiery to reason, but Herr Hitler considered it advisable to dispatch a telegram of greeting to the murderers at Beuthen, as a sign of his heartfelt sympathy. This was the telegram: 'My comrades! Confronted with this monstrous sentence I feel myself united with you by an unbounded loyalty. From this very moment your freedom is a point of honour with us. War against a Government under which such a thing is possible is our bounden duty.'

The man who had felt himself united in unbounded loyalty to five ruffians who had trampled to death a defenceless and blameless opponent was planning at this moment to become Chancellor of the German Reich.

As for von Papen, the fact that he had had the courage on this occasion to take action energetically and decisively against the National Socialist murderers might have been counted to him for virtue. But this would be doing him too much of an honour. At the last moment the death sentence was reduced to one of imprisonment for life. And six months later, when Hitler was in command, Herr von Papen witnessed a parade in which the five murderers of Potempa took part, marching along in a place of honour at the head of the S.A.

*Hindenburg rejects Hitler*

But we are anticipating historical developments. The deed itself must be alluded to here because the repercussions of this Potempa murder had a considerable influence on Hitler's attitude to Papen, and on the further political development of Germany.

Before the Beuthen death sentence had been pronounced, Adolf Hitler had an audience with Hindenburg. Schleicher had kept his promise to the Führer of the National Socialists. He had arranged this meeting. Schleicher, of course, after the mobilisation of the S.A., had no longer any intention of making Hitler Reichschancellor : he merely wanted to take the wind out of his sails.

On the morning of 12th August Hitler, who was at Haus Wachenfeld, had news from Schleicher that Hindenburg wanted to see him. Hitler immediately drove by car to Berlin, where he stayed the night with Goebbels at the latter's little country house at Caputh, near Potsdam. Hitler was of the opinion that his hour had arrived, and so was Goebbels. For hours on end the Führer strode up and down Goebbels' room, undecided what he should say or propose to Hindenburg. Goebbels has portrayed this torment of mind very clearly in his diary.

The following morning Hitler first drove to Papen. He was firmly convinced that Papen would now leave the field clear for him and use his influence with Hindenburg on his behalf.

Little did he know Papen. Their first few words together told Hitler that Papen knew that he had recently been assured of Hindenburg's confidence, and that at the moment neither Papen nor Hindenburg had any idea of making Hitler Chancellor. Papen informed him that at present Hindenburg did not intend any change of Government. But as Papen's own supporters, together with the National Socialists, possessed a majority, Hindenburg would probably consent to Hitler's appointment as Vice-Chancellor.

The word Vice-Chancellor was to Hitler like a red rag to a bull. He believed himself called to be Führer and Chancellor, or nothing. Anything less was an insult to him. For a whole hour Hitler's torrent of disgust was poured out upon Papen, then snarling with rage he returned to his headquarters in the Kaiserhof Hotel. There he took counsel with Goebbels and Goering as to whether he should visit Hindenburg. Whilst the three were still in conclave, Herr von Planck, Papen's secretary, telephoned to Hitler telling him that Hindenburg was expecting him at 4.15 p.m. In a flash his mood changed. He believed that a decision had not yet been reached. Precisely at four-fifteen he presented himself at the Presidency.

But the reception which awaited him was far worse than he could ever have imagined. Hindenburg was enraged because Hitler was accompanied by Captain Röhm, who, because of his reputation as a homosexualist, was singled out for Hindenburg's particular hatred. Moreover, he had heard from Papen that Hitler had refused to support the Government, and in unmistakable terms he reproached Hitler for his bad faith. Finally he read out to the Führer, who had been expecting his own appointment, the new list of ministers in Papen's cabinet. Hitler was not even asked to sit down. After an interview lasting ten to fifteen minutes, which was conducted with both parties standing, Hitler was abruptly ushered out. A few minutes later a Government communiqué, which treated the whole affair in a way very detrimental to Hitler, was issued to all the newspapers. The purport of this communiqué was that Hindenburg was



favourably disposed towards Hitler's demand, and only refused it on the grounds that his conscience and his duty to the Fatherland did not permit him to relinquish the whole Government exclusively to the National Socialist movement.

The effect of this communiqué was flatly crushing. The S.A., which was concentrated more and more in Berlin, had hoped that on this day Hitler would be Chancellor and give them the free run of the streets for murder and plundering. A large proportion of the associates of the Party, those who had voted for Hitler on the 31st July because they believed it was his hour, now wavered in their belief. As had been the case with the Social Democrats, a rapid falling off of votes was clearly seen in all the succeeding provincial and municipal elections.

The full force of Hitler's rage against Papen over the Hindenburg affair, and over the death sentences at Beuthen, was expressed in a tirade brimming over with hate which he addressed to the National Socialists on 15th August. To quote his words : ' Fellow Germans ! Whoever among you appreciates what is meant by the struggle for the honour and freedom of the nation will understand the reason for my refusal to enter this Government. Justice such as is dispensed by Herr von Papen will perhaps end in condemning thousands of National Socialists to death. Was it thought that I would lend my name to gloss over this insensate action, this challenge to the whole nation ? You have made a mistake, my fine gentlemen ! Now I know your " bloody impartiality " , Herr von Papen ! I desire victory for a national Germany, and annihilation for its Marxist destroyers and criminals ! But to be the executioner of the warriors of national freedom is no job for me ! Herr von Papen may quietly set up his Bloody Assize over us, but the power of our national uprising will make an end of this system as surely as we shall abolish Marxism, in spite of such attempts to save it.'

Hitler's intercession in favour of the Potempa murderers brought in its train a further loss of votes, but the flight from

National Socialism became still more marked when it was heard that now Hitler was even going to make an attempt to overthrow Hindenburg, the President of the Reich. In all the National Socialist circles violent attacks were made on Hindenburg. Hitler himself was tactless enough to declare publicly that he was young enough to wait for the next presidential election, which could hardly be said of Hindenburg.

If Herr von Papen had really been the important figure he thought he was, he would have been able to save Germany from National Socialism in those fateful days. He started the good work in many ways. He succeeded, for instance, in blocking the enormous subsidies which Hitler had received from the industrialists of the Rhine and the Ruhr until the election of the 31st July. The coffers of the National Socialist Party were emptying rapidly. On several occasions the S.A. had no pay, and there were already isolated cases of mutiny and discontent.

But it again became evident that Herr von Papen was no true politician, but an adventurer and a prey to ambition. For his struggle against Hitler was not actuated by any desire to protect the German nation from an immense danger. His reasons were purely personal: Hitler had set himself against Papen. Four months later, when Papen considered it possible that Hitler would again help him to power (by that time Papen had been defeated), not only did he enter into a new alliance with Hitler, but he also reopened for the National Socialists the money-bags of the industrialists.

At first, however, friction between Papen and Hitler became more acute over an affair of some importance. The Führer was now awaiting his opportunity of defeating Papen in parliament. The National Socialists had two hundred and thirty seats and they could consequently reckon for sure that a vote of no confidence in the Government would be supported by the Communists and defeat the Government.

*A Clash : Goering versus Papen*

By reason of its unusual composition the new Reichstag could neither live nor die, and least of all could it work reasonably. Hardly ten per cent of the six hundred and eight deputies were with Papen, and thus there was no question of a Government majority. Yet for a while the individual parties did not dare to move a vote of no confidence against Papen : there was the danger that Papen, or Hindenburg, would dissolve the Reichstag and order fresh elections. These elections were so expensive, and in July had already cost so much blood, that all parties fought shy of a dissolution.

The German Constitution laid it down that the President could at any time sign a decree pronouncing the dissolution of the Reichstag on the proposal of the Chancellor. The Government had only to lay this decree before the President of the Reichstag for the act of dissolution to be practically complete.

Herr von Papen, who was prudence personified where his own safety was concerned, had obtained such a decree in the early days of September. He had arranged through Meissner, the Secretary of State, to get it signed by Hindenburg, but it was undated. He could thus steal a march on any fighting vote against the Government.

At the meeting of the Reichstag on 12th September the Communists surprisingly enough put the motion of no confidence in the Government. A division was to decide whether or no Papen should remain in office.

With his usual slovenliness Papen, on this day of all days, had left Hindenburg's dissolution decree in his office. According to an old-established tradition this document had to be locked up in a special red brief-case. When the wily Communists discovered that Papen had appeared without his red brief-case, they produced with malicious glee the motion which was to overthrow him.

Papen turned pale when he became aware of his oversight, and immediately dispatched his secretary to fetch the missing case.

For the moment the National Socialists were undecided whether to support the Communists' motion. For Dr. Frick, the party chairman, was far more afraid than the other parties of a dissolution of the Reichstag under the unfavourable conditions then prevailing. So the National Socialists first moved an adjournment of the House for half an hour. Finally Dr. Frick hurried to Hitler in the nearby Kaiserhof Hotel to obtain his views. Hitler was triumphant. Here was his opportunity to cut Papen off short. Without bothering about the further consequences of his act, he ordered Dr. Frick to support the Communists and overthrow the Papen Government.

Hermann Goering was then the President of the Reichstag. This man had been a good air-pilot, but his knowledge of parliamentary procedure in the Reichstag was nil.

When he learnt from Frick that Hitler had ordered the defeat of the Government by a vote of no-confidence he immediately attempted to set in motion the division on the Communists' proposal.

Meanwhile the red brief-case with its decree had arrived, and Papen, asking for a hearing, tried to hand the document to Goering as President of the Reichstag.

Goering purposely turned a deaf ear. He excused himself later on, when confronted by a committee of enquiry, by saying that the division had already begun, and that he was not in a position to give Papen a hearing. Later still he treated himself to an orgy of gross invective against this blunder (as he called it) of the committee's. But on the 12th September he was so obsessed by the idea of downing Papen that he had not even noticed that Papen had laid on his desk, plain for everyone to see, the red case containing the dissolution decree. It is certainly true that Papen in his excitement had laid the case down before Goering upside down, and Goering later tried to make the excuse that he could not read the 'label'. But according to the rules of procedure the handing over of the decree to the Reichstag President was sufficient, and Goering was wrong in any case to have allowed the division to continue.

After Papen had passed over the decree to the President, he rose with the members of his Government and left the chamber proudly and noisily, his head held high. From that moment any further proceedings of the Reichstag were unconstitutional.

But Goering was so worked up that he did not see or hear what was going on around him. He simply whipped up the voting. To his great astonishment practically all the parties in the House, with the exception of a few independents, were united in their vote against Papen, and the Government was defeated by an overwhelming majority, five hundred and thirteen to thirty-two—or it would have been if this had not been a phantom division of a dissolved Reichstag.

The result was so ludicrous that it was afterwards said of Papen that he had succeeded in uniting the whole nation, from Communists to National Socialists, against his Government.

This affair indicated that Papen had practically no party supporting him. If, in spite of this, he was able to continue in office, the reason was that Hindenburg, now as ever, backed his protégé with unusual tenacity, and Schleicher saw no better substitute. For since the 13th August Hitler had treated the Reichswehr general with implacable hostility.

Politically Papen had hardly a chance of making any further decisions. Besides, Schleicher had so much say in the cabinet that Papen would hardly have trusted himself to come forward with any new proposals.

By way of exception, it must be said to Papen's credit that he had some understanding of the need for the 'Ankurbelung der Wirtschaft' (the cranking-up of industry), which was the technical term for the salvaging of industry from the crisis. Brüning's measures were actually built on a deflationist policy. Artificial restriction of purchasing power resulted in a depressed standard of living of the population, and the nation was held to most rigid economy. But at the beginning of the autumn of 1932 money and

credit had become so scarce in Germany that the normal functioning of trade and industry was almost impossible.

All praise must be given to Papen for not employing cheap inflationary methods, but for adopting the proposal of some of his economic advisers. By the issue of so-called 'tax vouchers' (*Steuergutscheine*) a sort of expansion of credit would take place. These tax vouchers could be discounted, but they had to be used within the year for the payment of taxes. In this way a credit for the term of about one year was provided for trade and industry out of State resources. These measures most certainly had an enlivening effect on German economic life, and towards the end of 1932 some indications were present to show that an improvement was in sight, at least in the heavy industry, which has always been the critical industry in the field of economic observation. But the consequences of the economic crisis were still most acutely felt in everyday life. The unemployment figure had soared to nearly eight million, the unrest in the trades expressed itself in strikes and lock-outs and a winter of penury, the like of which had not been seen since 1919, was on the threshold.

Under these portents Papen, after the dissolution of the Reichstag, fixed the new elections for the 6th November 1932.

## CHAPTER 10

### *Schleicher dislodges Papen*

#### *The National Socialists court the Workers*

It has often been declared that Hitler would have come to power in any case, even though Papen had not functioned (in January 1933) as his lackey. It may be that the National Socialists would have been represented in the Government in one form or another. But in the second half of 1932 a sharp falling-off in the Hitler movement was to be noted, and it would easily have been possible to keep the movement within reasonable bounds. Unfortunately history shows us only too clearly that without Papen's help, and without the jealousy between Papen and Schleicher, Germany would have been spared this lapse into barbarism.

In the summer of 1932 the National Socialist movement had reached its zenith. From the 13th August of that year its decline was obvious.

The contributory causes were several :

1. A clear rupture between Strasser and Hitler.
2. Alienation of industrial capital from the N.S.D.A.P.
3. The disappointment of the masses over Hitler's poor showing before Hindenburg, and his telegram to the Potempa murderers.
4. The end of the World Economic Crisis, and the slowly commencing improvement in the economic situation in Germany.

In National Socialist circles it was known quite well what a perilous plight the Party was in, and the discerning already considered the collapse of the Party, and with it the whole spectre of National Socialism, as imminent. Dr. Goebbels, who has published an interesting diary (*Vom Kaiserhof zur*

*Reichskanzlei*) of the period from the beginning of 1932 to the middle of 1933, refers to this feeling in several places. 'A great feeling of depression hangs over the Berlin Gau,' he writes in one place. Elsewhere he says that either the Party must be in power at the end of 1932 or it is lost. And in yet another place he even mentions Hitler's utter desperation over Strasser's defection, and the expected disintegration of the Party. He describes how, on 8th December 1932, Hitler was very downcast, and quotes his own words, 'If once the Party breaks up I shall shoot myself.'

Preparations for the November elections had to be made with inadequate resources. The Party treasurer was helpless and absolutely desperate. Payments to the S.A. had to be stopped. In a few weeks the Party debts grew to twelve million marks, or more than a million pounds. In the S.A. there were clear indications of dissension and breakdown. A Party officer here and there came to the Liberal newspapers and sold Party secrets for trifling sums.

Gregor Strasser, the real political leader of the Party, recognised beforehand what was at stake. He made up his mind that, following the cessation of the subsidies from the industrialists, the Party was only to be saved if the working classes could be more strongly attracted to the movement. Gregor Strasser had an exceptionally capable brain, and not only that, but one of the few really respectable and upright characters in the Party. Some of his speeches in the Reichstag showed clearly that he understood the desires of the masses. Even though some of the points in his programme were eccentric and immature, yet he had understood what the masses expected of National Socialism. He summed up these wishes as an 'anti-capitalistic yearning'.

With this slogan Gregor Strasser not only faced the Reichstag but also went among the workers. In one of his great speeches he had minted these words :

'The anti-capitalistic yearning is a proof that we are standing at a great turning-point in time : the victory over



Liberalism, and the introduction of a new way of thinking into Economics, and the relations to the State.'

This conception contrasted rather violently with the assurances which Hitler had given the industrialists of the Rhine and Ruhr about the aims of the movement. But Hitler did not once trust himself to give directions to Gregor Strasser, who was the only independent man in the movement.

Gregor Strasser now made a considerable move to the Left. His agitators went into the works which were already partly occupied by trustworthy National Socialists. He let it be known that National Socialism would make the workers the dominant class in the State as soon as it came to power. And the certainty that National Socialism would come to power was impressed on the workers in spite of the growing inner doubts of the Führer.

Strasser went so far as to make contact with the Social Democratic leaders of the Trade Unions. In a speech at the Berlin Stadium, in the autumn of 1932, he openly praised the policy of Leipart, one of these leaders. Strasser's idea admitted no ambiguity. It was the magnificent conception of creating a great German Workers' Front by bringing into line the National Socialists and the Social Democrats. This would form at one and the same time a solid parliamentary majority and a healthy foundation for a government. In this purpose there was no doubt a certain danger for Hitler, who was pursuing quite different aims. But this solution would have met excellently, not only the needs of the broad mass of the people, but also the requirements of the State.

As was only to be expected, the great industrialists and landowners looked askance at this new development. They treated Hitler with still greater coldness when he publicly showed himself totally incapable of countering this 'despotism' of Gregor Strasser's.

But things got worse. As Hitler saw that he could not curb Strasser, he tried (at the most unfavourable moment) to outbid him. Towards the end of October 1932 a strike

of transport workers broke out in Berlin. This had been hatched by the Communists. Now, instead of demonstrating his friendship for capital by sending his men to work, Hitler decided to let the National Socialists stay out with the Communists. This decision was the more grotesque because the Social Democratic Trade Unions, and also the Strasser group itself, had advised against any connection at all with the Communists. The strike was carried out without the approval of the Trade Unions. It had had a depressing effect on the population and the antipathy to this unusual union likewise expressed itself in a considerable loss of votes by the National Socialists.

### *Hitler loses Ground*

On the 6th November 1932, with the paralysing effect of the transport strike still persisting, the elections for the new Reichstag took place.

Papen had laid great store by strengthening the position of the German Nationalists, who were by this time almost alone in their support of his policy. The Zentrum had left him high and dry. The opposition of Brüning and Kaas was implacable. This enmity had become so powerful that it led Hitler to attempt, on the basis of their common hostility to Papen, a proposal to Brüning for the formation of a common government with the National Socialists, which would have had a parliamentary majority (two hundred and thirty National Socialists and ninety-seven of the Zentrum out of the total six hundred and eight seats in the Reichstag). But Brüning politely refused. However great might be his hatred of Papen, his distaste and aversion to Hitler were greater still.

The National Socialists had very little money indeed with which to finance the election propaganda, and consequently they endeavoured to persuade the masses by relying more and more upon the bludgeon of terror. Despite this, the result was devastating for themselves, and proved that secession from Hitler was in full progress, and that it was but a matter of a few months before the sun would set on



PAPEN, WITH HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTERS, ON HIS WAY TO THE POLL IN BERLIN ON NOVEMBER 6, 1932. *Associated Press*

the Party. Hitler lost thirty-three seats, or more than two million votes. The numbers of the National Socialist deputies declined from two hundred and thirty to one hundred and ninety-seven. Nevertheless, it was clear that Strasser's advance into the workers' camp had at least salvaged a proportion of the working-class vote. For the Social Democrats also lost seats, twelve to be precise. They were reduced from one hundred and thirty-three seats to one hundred and twenty-one. The Communists went up from eighty-nine to one hundred. Papen was able to claim a modest success when the German Nationalists could show an increase from thirty-seven to fifty-one. The votes given to his supporters had swollen by almost fifty per cent. But in spite of this Papen's Government had but ten per cent of the Reichstag at its command.

The Zentrum had a relapse from ninety-seven to eighty-nine seats. This removed a certain danger for Papen, because now the two opponents of his Government, namely, the National Socialists and the Zentrum, no longer possessed a combined majority in the new Reichstag.

The National Socialists were, it is true, still the most powerful party in parliament, but it could easily be estimated that in the normal course of things (and on the basis of the municipal elections which took place in December and January) a few weeks later the supporters of the National Socialists would only have obtained at the most one hundred and fifty seats.

A turning-point in the movement itself now appeared to be marked in the vote of the electors too.

Thereupon Schleicher had another of his diabolical ideas. On one hand he was heartily sick of Papen, who as Chancellor had been an unpleasant disappointment, and on the other he felt that the moment had come when he could once again expose Hitler before his own supporters. Therefore in the days immediately following the November elections, he persuaded Papen to announce a 'mock resignation' to give Hitler another chance. Schleicher, like Papen, was completely convinced that Hitler could not succeed in

forming a parliamentary government. And Hindenburg was not inclined to invest Hitler with dictatorial powers.

### *Papen's First Resignation*

There was no more occasion for Papen's resignation at that time than there had been at any other since the 31st May when he had taken over the Government. On the contrary. Following the November elections Papen's position was consolidated in so far as the German Nationalists, his supporters, could claim a large increase of seats, while the National Socialists and the Zentrum had lost so many that a joint government was no longer possible. Further, Papen had Hindenburg's fullest confidence. The President's goodwill towards him protected him not only at this time but also during the next two years. The Reichswehr, too, was to a certain extent still behind him, though naturally only so long as he was under Schleicher's wing. And now that Schleicher counselled a formal resignation Papen declared himself ready. He was completely convinced that he, Papen, would not fail to return to power, strengthened by this grand gesture. For it was to be assumed that after Hitler's reawakened hopes had once more been shattered, Hindenburg, the President, would once again turn to Papen; there was also the hope that other parties too would join a Papen Government when they were forced to recognise that for the moment no other solution was possible.

Papen's formal resignation was announced on 17th November 1932.

Papen himself proposed to Hindenburg the appointment of Adolf Hitler as his successor.

It was of course to be a fresh snare for Hitler.

And this time Hitler was prudent enough not to fall into it, for it was a trap which had been set for him by his two bitterest opponents, Schleicher and Papen.

It was natural enough that he immediately appeared on the scene when he heard that they wished to entrust him with the formation of the Government. But this time he arrived in Berlin with his whole retinue, and insisted that

he should have a thorough discussion with the President before he expressed his willingness to form a government. He wished to make the decision himself. Hitler had learnt a lot from his defeat on 13th August.

Nevertheless, this was yet another defeat, as Schleicher and Papen had foreseen.

On this occasion, the 19th November 1932, Hindenburg received Hitler much more pleasantly. He invited him to sit down, and even put up with a harangue lasting an hour and a half. But he merely placed two alternatives before him. Could he, or could he not form a government on the basis of a parliamentary majority? So far, Papen's spade-work had been well done.

Hitler wriggled like an eel. He naturally knew that it would only be possible to form a parliamentary government by sharing power, not only with Brüning, but also with Hugenberg. He could not make up his mind because he desired to have all the power in his own hands.

For five whole days the negotiations between Hitler and Hindenburg went on. They proceeded chiefly by means of letters, in which Hitler repeatedly endeavoured to convince Hindenburg that he could only take over the Government on the basis of the President's confidence, just like Papen, and without a majority in the Reichstag.

But Hindenburg stood firm. One of his replies to Hitler ran thus :

'You know that I advocate the idea of a presidential cabinet, which is led, not by a party leader, but by a man who is above parties, and that such a man be a person who enjoys my special confidence. You have declared that your movement is only at my disposal for the formation of a cabinet at the head of which you, the Party leader, would stand. If I consent to this, then I must demand that such a cabinet has a majority in the Reichstag.'

In other words, Papen was the man who had the President's special confidence. If Hitler wanted to take over the Government without this special confidence, then he must be able to rely on the confidence of the Reichstag.

After this letter the negotiations were broken off. Hitler once again withdrew disgustedly to his ' Magic Mountain ', not however without having previously made public the whole of his correspondence with Hindenburg.

But Papen remained Chancellor for only a few days.

*Stabbed by Schleicher*

Only for a very few days.

For Schleicher was gathering himself together for a final blow, and one which came like a bolt from the blue to Papen.

Schleicher had recognised that this fresh defeat by Hindenburg had shown up Hitler even more clearly before the electorate. It was sufficient that the President had given a party leader to understand that he did not enjoy his confidence. But beside its leader there was the Party itself, which after all had one hundred and ninety-seven seats in the Reichstag. And the political representative of this party was not Hitler himself, but Gregor Strasser. The obvious course for Schleicher was therefore to set about throwing Papen overboard in order to form with Strasser and a section of the Social Democrats a coalition cabinet : Schleicher-Strasser-Leipart.

Behind the scenes there must have been a savage affray between Papen and Schleicher. This collision between the two intriguers was more than violent. But Schleicher had the Reichswehr behind him, and Papen practically no one except, possibly, Hindenburg. And Hindenburg had at first set almost as much store by Schleicher as Papen.

There was thus no doubt about the result of this battle behind the scenes. The victory had to be Schleicher's.

Gnashing his teeth and filled with ideas of revenge, Papen now had to announce his real resignation. Now that the Reichswehr had dropped him, he had neither party nor followers, and could no longer continue in power merely on the strength of Hindenburg's confidence.

On the 30th November 1932 Herr von Papen quitted the Reichschancellery.

His Government had lasted six months to the day.

*The Papen Government summed up*

Before describing further historical developments we will attempt in the briefest form a summary of Papen's activities as Chancellor. This is not so very easy, because during the whole period Schleicher's will predominated in the political sphere, whilst in economic and cultural affairs in consequence of Papen's lack of personal experience he was much influenced by specialists at that time.

At the outset it was believed that the tendencies of the Herrenklub and the Ring would show their influence in the policy of the Papen Government, but it had to be admitted after a few weeks that this influence was far less than its members had assumed it would be. Neither Herr von Gleichen nor Werner Schotte, both of whom had cultural ideals and intended to give the Government the benefit of them, could prevail in the slightest against Schleicher's powerful personality. Neither could there be any question of Herr von Papen's admitting the more powerful influence of the Junkers and the upper class. Papen's only really great success lay in the suspension of the Prussian Government, and so in the beginning of the complete subordination of the provinces to the Reich Government. This success did not harmonise in any way with the ideas of the Herrenklub, but merely expressed the wishes of Schleicher, and naturally of Hitler too.

Papen was by no means constructive. He contented himself in fact with carrying on what Brüning had begun. One cannot blame him for this, for times then were so difficult politically and economically that it would have required a far longer period than six months to arouse the constructive potentialities that slumbered in Papen and his associates.

Papen himself was very sure that his Government would last longer. Werner Schotte relates that once Schleicher, when asked how long the Papen Government would last, answered 'Four years'. Papen himself shared this opinion, for when Werner Schotte asked him about it he said 'Yes, this splendid reply expresses pretty clearly the fact that the



characteristic of the Government so much stressed by the opposition, I mean that it is transition Government, does *not* correspond with the conceptions of the Government itself on the point'. Thus Papen, like Schleicher, believed that he would be in power four years. Snared by this delusion he may have said to himself that he need not display his constructive abilities right at the beginning, because there was plenty of time for that. But before he could make up his mind what governmental measures to concentrate on, Schleicher, the very man who had dragged him from his obscurity, now cast him aside like an outworn glove.

As a man, Papen was a violent contrast to his predecessor, Brüning. Whilst Brüning worked ascetically day and night in service of the State, regardless of his personal needs, Papen enjoyed his position as a human being too. He blatantly sunned himself in the glow of the chancellorship, especially in the period in Lausanne where he was highly honoured as the representative of the German Reich. Papen's point of view as Chancellor was that personal enjoyment should not be neglected. He wished 'to spare his nerves' and was consequently of the opinion that the onus of governing could be lightly doffed at week-ends and of an evening. He was therefore on Sundays a very frequent visitor at the races or sporting clubs, and also patronised freely theatres and concerts, and was often seen, too, in high society and at parties.

In the affairs of government his actions, so far as he was able to interfere, corresponded with his general character. They were not the result of long deliberation, but were impulsive and mostly conceived on the whim of the moment. In consequence, even during his short tenure in office, the fortuitous and erratic nature of his policy was clearly recognisable. His secretaries and executives could indeed modify these elements, and their handling introduced a certain adjustment which made the erratic somewhat less perceptible to the citizen. But his immediate subordinates were as apt to make a song about this part of their

work as they were to suffer from the abruptness of Papen's decisions.

On the whole it must be admitted that as Chancellor he did not make the false moves which one would have expected of him from previous experience. His six months of government were no failure. It must also be said that his downfall was in no way due to a failure of his capacity or his powers, but purely to the intrigue of Schleicher, who was tired of being merely the leader of the Government in practice while Papen sunned himself in the glory of the title. Schleicher said to himself that he could now quietly take over, for the period while he worked with Papen had shown him that to all intents and purposes he had the reins in his hands.

It was only in economic questions that Papen could to a certain extent go his own way. It has already been indicated that his system of tax vouchers contributed in no small degree to the relief of German industry at the end of 1932. His previous close connection with industry and the considerable intercourse he had had with the leading industrialists stood him in good stead, for he showed more attention to and understanding of healthy economic development than many other German Chancellors. He therefore gave his Minister of Trade, Dr. Warmbold, who was a very clever man, a free hand, and so was able to achieve greater successes in the economic than in the political sphere.

Yet Papen made one cardinal error for which the German nation and the whole world has had to pay most heavily. Although towards the end of 1932 he could clearly perceive the break-up of the Hitler movement (which was in part due to his own measures), yet he had not learnt his lesson.

If he had given Hitler the *coup-de-grâce*, he would have done one of the really great deeds of history. But no; he had already had one bitter experience of Hitler's perfidy, he had fought him on that score and borne the brunt of his counter-attack. And now, barely a month after his own dismissal, from motives of purely personal revenge he stretched out his hand to help Hitler to power.

Even if Papen's Government had been much more successful than it was, all his achievements would not have weighed against his overwhelming fault in once again rating his personal vanity higher than the destiny of the German people.

Twice in 1932 Dr. Brüning, who had been ruthlessly thrown over by Papen, had the opportunity of allying himself with Hitler and taking his revenge on Papen and Schleicher. He refused to pander to Hitler; but Papen possessed no such self-restraint. When a few weeks later his chance came, he seized it with both hands. He had tasted the sweets of power, and was not the man to resign himself to oblivion as unselfishly as his far greater predecessor had done.

And so once again, but this time decisively, Papen thrust himself into world history. The world moved on unshaken by his Government. But his fall was the signal for events of critical importance.

Hindenburg found Schleicher's new intrigues very little to his liking. He preferred Papen to Schleicher as Chancellor. On 30th November 1932, when Papen after his resignation paid a farewell visit to Hindenburg, the old Field-Marshal presented Major von Papen with his portrait, signed and inscribed with a line from the old soldiers' song :  
*'Ich hatt' einen Kamaraden . . .'*

# THIRD PART

## HITLER'S LACKEY

### CHAPTER II

#### *The Cologne Agreement*

Papen's personal revenge on Schleicher was swift and effective.

On 30th November 1932, Papen was compelled by Schleicher to resign.

On 2nd December 1932, Schleicher himself as Reichschancellor took over the Government of the German Reich.

On 4th January 1933, at the house of the banker Schroeder in Cologne, Papen had that historic interview with Hitler at which the arrangements for a combined Hitler-Papen Government were settled.

On 30th January 1933, Hindenburg appointed Hitler Reichschancellor and Papen Vice-Chancellor.

Exactly two months after his inglorious departure Papen had apparently succeeded in returning to power in great form. That he did not actually wield this power but had merely hoisted another into the saddle was due partly to his own lack of driving force, and partly to the brutal will to power of Hitler and Goering. As Vice-Chancellor Papen was a complete failure. But it was not here that he played his historic rôle. His real contribution was the Cologne Agreement by which the commanding positions in Germany and in the whole of Central Europe were handed over to National Socialism 'in a constitutional way'.

But before describing the circumstances attending this agreement a brief account must be given of the history of

General von Schleicher's efforts to save the Reich from National Socialism in its worst form.

*Gregor Strasser, Vice-Chancellor Designate*

When General von Schleicher, following the fall of Papen, took over the Government on 2nd December, he had no idea of setting up a military dictatorship in Germany. He was, it is true, the first general since Caprivi to occupy the position of Reichschancellor. But his real desire was to find a way out after years of government without parliament, or even against parliament. His intention was to endeavour to form a super-party cabinet including the German Nationalists and the Zentrum, the 'reasonable' National Socialists and Social Democrats.

The deterioration of the Hitler movement was not only clearly recognisable internally, but also became outwardly obvious when Gregor Strasser and Dr. Frick were seen to be in open opposition to Hitler. We have already described how Strasser endeavoured to save the healthy core of the National Socialist movement by linking up with the working classes and the Trade Unions. This was the point of departure for Schleicher's policy. The Strasser wing of the National Socialists and the Leipart wing of the Social Democrats in combination with the parties of the Centre were to form a parliamentary majority for his Government. Gregor Strasser was to enter his cabinet as Vice-Chancellor, and Social Democracy was also to be represented there.

Actually Gregor Strasser was in agreement with this proposal. Dr. Frick also approved. The two hoped, after the various reverses which Hitler had experienced, at least to prevent the further decomposition of the Party by this means. As Hindenburg had twice made it clear that he rejected Hitler as Chancellor, Frick and Strasser believed they were acting in the interests of the Party when they entered the Government instead of Hitler. But Hitler was the Party 'Führer', and discipline called for his consent to this arrangement. When his two party friends made this proposal, Hitler, as was really only to be expected, almost

had a fit. Frick was too much upset by his master's ravings—for he was entirely Hitler's creature—to dare to take another independent step. Not so Strasser. This man, who was perhaps the best brain and the most respectable character among the National Socialists,\* had always preserved his independence, and now insisted that either Hitler must give his consent or he, Strasser, would secede from the Party.

For six whole days the battle between Hitler and Strasser raged. Meanwhile the S.A. had to go begging, for they got no pay. The signs of disintegration within the Party reached an extraordinary stage, gigantic debts were piling up. Hitler saw himself faced with ruin, and seemed for a while inclined to seek salvation by giving Strasser his consent. But as had so often happened previously he could not summon up enough courage to make the decision. He vacillated; several times he agreed, only to retract his decision the next moment, until finally, on 8th December, Strasser reached the end of his patience. He sat down in a Berlin café and wrote a long letter to Hitler, announcing his renunciation of any appointment in the Government, and placing his office in the Party at the Führer's disposal.

In this letter Strasser stated that Hitler's plans were cynical and anti-national. And to cap this he further stated that he was no longer in harmony with the N.S.D.A.P.'s, or Hitler's political notions. He felt himself in opposition to the radical tendency which saw its salvation in the use of physical violence on political opponents. Among the opponents of this policy of violence, declared Strasser, there were valuable constructive forces, in Social Democracy for instance and in the other parties. These should neither be repulsed, nor should force be used against them. The practice of the National Socialist leaders did not harmonise in any way with the ideals put forward again and again in

\* A more detailed description of the personality and the importance of Gregor Strasser as well as of the other leaders around Hitler is given in the author's book, *Hitler's Twelve Apostles* (Edward Arnold & Co., London, 1939).

their propaganda. In the place of consciously responsible leadership, clear in its aim, the inherently false demagoguery of a Goebbels had stepped in. With the sanction of its chief leaders the Party was carrying on a 'desperado policy'. They were working towards chaos, a reign of violence and a Germany in ruins.

A plainer and more lucid criticism than this, from the man best qualified to judge the Party, the man next in power to Hitler, has perhaps never been given. Gregor Strasser with the skill of a surgeon had laid bare the deficiencies and faults of the Party and of Hitler himself. These faults and deficiencies were more obvious to the opponents of National Socialism than to its adherents. But this alarm of Gregor Strasser's curbed Herr von Papen's lust for revenge as little as his previous personal experience of Hitler had done.

After Strasser had written and delivered this letter he went home, packed his trunk and forthwith set out for Italy. He only returned to Germany in January 1933. In recognition of his earlier services to the Party he was given the post of manager in a chemical factory, and was shot by Goering's Gestapo on 30th June 1934.

Strasser's departure made Schleicher's combination untenable. He could not form a parliamentary government, as he had let Hindenburg assume he would, but had to continue on the same basis as Papen had done. Hindenburg soon lost confidence in Schleicher, as he could not keep his promise, and when the General demanded a fresh dissolution of the Reichstag in order to gain time, Hindenburg refused the signature which he had so willingly given to Papen. And that was really the *coup-de-grâce* for the Schleicher Government at the end of January 1933.

### *Papen backs Hitler*

There is hardly any doubt that Papen did his best to provoke Hindenburg against Schleicher. Even after his downfall he had free approach to Hindenburg and could thus incite the old man against Schleicher to his heart's

content, and from the outset sow mines in his deadly enemy's path.

But at the moment it was not enough merely to overthrow one more Government or one more man. A crisis of this political and economic nature demanded the discovery of a constructive solution ; for in the absence of any such solution the Schleicher cabinet would simply have remained in office.

After Strasser's departure Hitler had all he could do to prevent the Party's ruin. If financial help was not forthcoming the Party would be lost and with it the S.A. At this moment Hitler turned to Papen. He understood this ambitious man well enough to know that he shared his enmity of Schleicher. Papen had once closed the moneybags of the Rhine and Ruhr industrialists against him. Papen was now to assist him by opening them up again.

Papen knew that if he complied with Hitler's request he would be saving the Party from collapse ; but in spite of that he acceded.

In the middle of December, scarcely a week after Strasser's secession, a financial council was held through Papen's intervention. The sole object of this council was to arrest the decline of the National Socialist Party. Among other former friends of Hitler there were present at this council Krupp, Thyssen, Vögeler and Springorum. In the early days of January, when the agreement between Hitler and Papen was settled, payments were made into the Party coffers by the industrialists. Debts could then be cleared and the mercenaries paid again.

Once more Hitler was saved.

Papen was of the firm opinion that he now had Hitler under his thumb. Money to carry on the Party was the deciding factor with Hitler, and Papen imagined himself to be the keeper of the key. If he now entered into an alliance with Hitler he would be the master and Hitler the slave. So the position of the Schleicher-Papen Government, where the Minister of Defence had played the tune, and he, the Chancellor, had danced to his piping, would be reversed.



He thought he could risk making Hitler Chancellor 'by Papen's grace', while he as Vice-Chancellor pulled the strings.

In the course of December there were constant verbal communications through intermediaries, and a stream of letters of a highly personal nature, passing between Hitler and Papen. As an outcome of all this an important personal meeting was to take place to celebrate the reconciliation between the two men and to engineer a new plot against Schleicher.

On the evening of the 3rd January Hitler left Munich with his usual bodyguard. He announced that he intended to go to an election meeting at Lippe-Deilmold. Actually, however, he went not to Hanover, but to Cologne. Dr. Otto Dietrich, Hitler's press chief, has written a kind of diary '*Mit Hitler in die Macht*' (Into power with Hitler). He was with Hitler on this occasion and described the secret meeting between Hitler and Papen as follows :

Very early in the morning we all get out at Bonn. Schreck is there at the station with the Führer's car to drive us to Godesberg at dawn. Short interval for breakfast. A closed car drives up. The Führer gets in. He drives off. Destination unknown to us.

But the Führer had given us instructions in advance to continue the journey in the car, without him, in the direction of Cologne. Three kilometres beyond Cologne, on the road to Düsseldorf, we were to stop and wait.

Towards midday we reach the agreed meeting-place. The weather was cold and damp. We wait. We walk up and down on the wet road. We pass the time in talking ; speculations of every kind as to where the Führer can be. No one knows of a stopping place, no one has any hint of the meaning of this separation.

Two hours later the closed car drives up from Bonn. It stops. The Führer gets out and comes into his car. The closed car turns and vanishes in the direction of Cologne.

On the way to Düsseldorf the Führer dropped hints that he had had an interview with a political notability.

I somehow gathered that he was extraordinarily satisfied with the outcome of his secret excursion.

This was on the 4th January 1933.

The discussions between Hitler and Herr von Papen took place at the house of the banker Schroeder, where also the first encounter between Hitler and Herr von Ribbentrop had happened. Schroeder was a popular go-between, who enjoyed playing a part in politics, and delighted above all in acting as a kind of patron saint for Hitler.

Hitler had every reason to be pleased with the result of the interview. There was a solemn reconciliation. The Potempa telegram and Hitler's various exposures by Papen were forgotten, as were the savage attacks of the National Socialists on the *Erbsälzer*. Under the aegis of Schroeder an agreement was made which was to have extraordinarily far-reaching consequences for the whole world.

A cabinet of national concentration was to be formed in which the National Socialists, the German Nationalists and part of the Zentrum were to create a Reichstag majority for the Government. Hitler was to be Chancellor, Papen Vice-Chancellor, and Hugenberg Minister of Economics.

Papen bound himself to make the industrialists more interested in Hitler. He was to use the slogan that the National Socialist Party must be saved and maintained as a bulwark against the onward drive of Communism. Further, Papen declared himself ready to exploit Hindenburg's partiality for him by influencing him in the direction of a Hitler-Papen coalition.

On the other hand, Hitler bound himself not to undertake any alteration in the cabinet without the consent of Hindenburg, Papen and Hugenberg. He bound himself not to let the S.A. loose in the streets, nor to allow any acts of terrorism: he was to renounce anything in the nature of a 'Bartholomew's Day' or a 'Night of the Long Knife'. He promised to be a 'good boy', to keep his word and to rule in loyal partnership with Papen and Hugenberg.

Neither party had any intention of keeping its word. Papen's idea was to use Hitler as a means of coming

to power and defeating Schleicher. He was convinced that Hitler and his men, who knew nothing whatever about ruling, would very soon break their necks and leave him to take over the Government as the saviour of the Fatherland.

And Hitler knew that once he had the Reichschancellorship in his hands power should not slip from him. Let him be Chancellor, let him get the Reichswehr so much under his thumb that they would not march against his S.A., and then he could rely on the brutality of his battalions, who would stop at nothing. Both Papen and Hitler agreed that the Ministry of Defence must be taken over by a general who was a soldier and a soldier only ; he was to have no finger in the political pie.

Papen had the opportunity of having a private word with Hindenburg, for the President had decided that Papen might continue living at the Reichschancellery even after his defeat. At this time Hindenburg's palace was undergoing building alterations, and the President moved into the Reichschancellery for a while. Papen was thus his next-door neighbour. Old Hindenburg passed many an evening in the company of his son Oskar, his secretary Meissner and the witty Papen who always tried to curry favour with the old man. He retailed gossip and cracked jokes. Hindenburg was mostly in a bad humour, and it would not have been wise to take him by surprise over this new Hitler-Papen project. The soil must be carefully prepared to prevent Hindenburg once more airing his misgivings about the ' Bohemian corporal '.

Making long detours and exercising the utmost prudence Papen reconnoitred the terrain. Every evening the new project was doled out to the President piecemeal, and Papen, the arch-intriguer, understood excellently not only how to bring in small pinpricks for Schleicher, the Chancellor, but also how to sketch, first in rough outline and then in more detail, a new solution which could be put into practice without another dissolution of the Reichstag.

*Schleicher prepares a Riposte*

Naturally the fact that Papen was hatching a fresh plot against him could not be hidden from Schleicher. On the same evening that Hitler had travelled to Cologne for his conversation with Papen, Strasser had come back to Berlin from Italy. Schleicher immediately took pains to resume his discussions with Strasser, in the hope of inducing him to bring about a split in the National Socialist Party and so forcing a new election.

Simultaneously Schleicher touched off some mines of his own with the object of undermining the position of Papen and the great landowners. In the middle of January he published information regarding scandals in connection with the 'Osthilfe' (see page 116), which not only brought to light corruption in the apportionment of the money, but also gave some details regarding the enrichment, from the same source, of Hermine, the second wife of the ex-Kaiser. The result of this was that feeling against the landowners ran very high among the populace. Hindenburg, however, took this action of Schleicher's very much amiss, for, owning as he did the Neudeck estate, he felt a particularly strong bond of union with the propertied class.

This fact tipped the beam for Hindenburg. During January two combinations for a new Government had been put before him: first there was that of Schleicher, who with Strasser and a section of the Social Democrats now desired to form a parliamentary coalition government; and then there was the Hitler-Papen plan, including Hugenberg.

At the last moment the latter project was nearly wrecked. For on the one hand Hindenburg was still hesitating to make Hitler Chancellor. He wanted Papen to be Chancellor and Hitler Vice-Chancellor. On the other hand Hitler was not content with being in tutelage to Papen and Hugenberg. Moreover the seats which had been reserved for the National Socialists in the new cabinet were too unimportant.

Now Schleicher made his fatal mistake. Negotiations

with Strasser lasted too long for him to press for a quick decision from Hindenburg. He dropped Strasser, and intended further to weaken the position of the National Socialists by means of a fresh dissolution of the Reichstag, and then to carry through his combination all the more easily. If Schleicher had been granted a dissolution, Hitler could hardly have avoided a further sensible falling-off of votes in spite of the new financial assistance from industry.

But on the 28th January Hindenburg refused Schleicher his dissolution, and this to all intents and purposes meant his defeat. For without that decree in its red case he did not dare to risk a division in the Reichstag.

Hindenburg had refused his signature purely at the insistence of Papen, and chiefly because on the previous day Papen had informed him that his national cabinet was already assured.

### *Intrigue by Papen*

This national cabinet was actually by no means assured. For at the last minute Hitler and Hugenberg came forward with new demands which threatened to blow the whole edifice to smithereens.

Papen reached for his trusty weapon—intrigue—to compel Hitler with all the means at his disposal to take over power.

In the description of the activities of the Herrenklub it has been mentioned that one of the founders of the club was an intimate friend of Papen's. This was Herr von Alvensleben-Neugattersleben. (We may note in passing that this man and Dr. Werner Schotte, another founder of the club who was similarly closely connected with Papen, were both shot on 30th June 1934.) Herr von Alvensleben was known in Berlin political circles for a notorious go-between, and he was freely used as such by all parties alike.

On the morning of the 29th January 1933 Herr von Alvensleben visited Colonel von Hindenburg, the President's son. He was highly excited and informed the Colonel that he had just heard that Schleicher was gathering the Reichswehr in Potsdam for the purpose of carrying out a military

putsch the next day. Papen, Hitler and even the President himself, as well as his son, were to be arrested and martial law proclaimed in Germany.

On the one side it was declared that this plan actually existed and that the Reichswehr were determined to back their popular general to the last man, and to defend him against Hitler, and even against Hindenburg. The other side of the story was that the whole thing had been nothing more than another intrigue of Papen's, who made use of Herr von Alvensleben's garrulity to hawk the rumour round with the object of forcing a decision from the President and Hitler, both of whom were shilly-shallying. Historically speaking it is now impossible to confirm which story was correct, for both parties took the trouble to destroy all documentary evidence referring to these decisive events of the 29th January. The two statements must therefore remain at variance.

At all events Papen made haste to acquaint the two Hindenburgs with the danger of this putsch plan, and for this he used Alvensleben who was also despatched to the Kaiserhof Hotel, Hitler's headquarters, to make it clear to him that the National Socialists' last chance lay in an immediate decision. Otherwise the Reichswehr would strike, and strike without mercy, against Hitler and his S.A.

Papen let Hindenburg and Hitler see that the formation of a new cabinet must be accomplished within twenty-four hours ; otherwise it would be too late.

His move was a brilliant success. The President and the Führer threw caution to the winds. Hugenberg, it is true, still had an objection. He said that in a dissolution of the Reichstag unilateral changes could be made by Hitler in the composition of the Government. With great solemnity Hitler gave his word of honour that 'whatever the result of the coming elections, all the ministers functioning in this cabinet will remain in office after 5th March 1933'. The 5th March 1933 was to be the date of a new election.

On the 30th January 1933 Papen and Hitler appeared

before Hindenburg. The two men informed him of the success attending their 'national concentration', whereupon Hindenburg commissioned Herr Adolf Hitler to form a new government in combination with Herr von Papen as Vice-Chancellor.

## CHAPTER 12

### *The Hitler-Papen Government*

#### *Wish-fulfilment Dreams*

President Hindenburg knew as well as Herr von Papen that Adolf Hitler's word of honour stood for nothing. This was one of the reasons for the President's prolonged resistance to Hitler's appointment. He would never have given his consent if he had not loved and trusted Papen so much. So that it was Papen, who had cajoled and persuaded him over a period of three weeks, who was directly responsible when Hitler at last came constitutionally to power. And Papen had not undertaken this task because he thought that it would benefit the German nation. His motive was hatred of Schleicher, and that dream of his that with Hitler's help he could himself assume a dictatorship over Germany. Papen was entirely convinced that Hitler was incapable of acting as chief of the Government. He was so sure that he fixed the new election for the 5th March, confident that the first five weeks of Hitler's Government would suffice to expose its Führer and inflict still greater losses on the National Socialist Party.

Hindenburg and Hugenberg was far less optimistic. They had none of Papen's recklessness. They recognised very well the danger to the State when such unscrupulous men as Hitler and Goering became all-powerful. But these men, too, had their dreams and delusions. They believed that the precautions they had taken in the formation of the Government would suffice to keep a tight rein on Hitler, and hobble him and his Party to such an extent that a break-away would be impossible.

This was the composition of the Government :

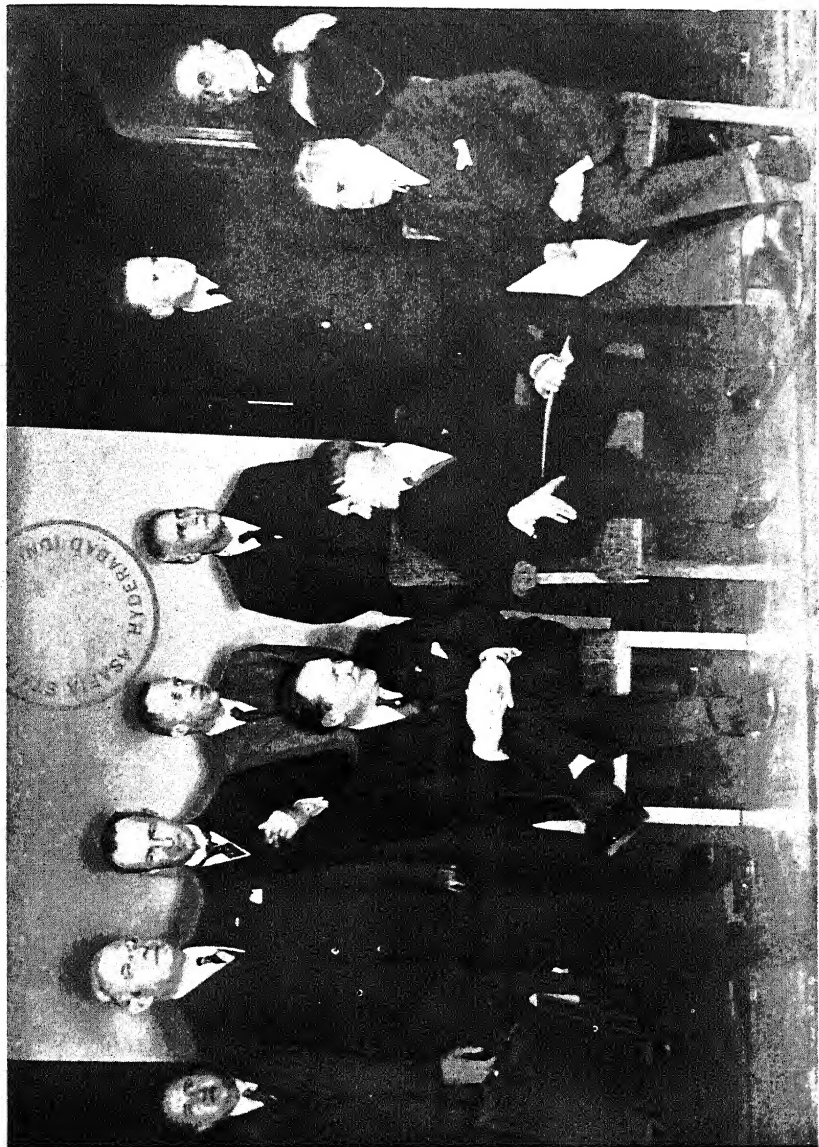


Reichschancellor :	Adolf Hitler
Vice-Chancellor :	Franz von Papen
Foreign Minister :	Freiherr von Neurath
Finance :	Graf von Schwerin-Krosigk
Trade :	Geheimrat Hugenberg
Agriculture :	Geheimrat Hugenberg
Defence :	General von Blomberg
Chief of the Office of the Ministry of Defence :	Colonel von Reichenau
Labour :	Franz Seldte, Leader of the Stahlhelm
Interior :	Dr. Frick
Justice :	Dr. Guertner
Transport :	Freiherr Eltz von Rubenach
Without Portfolio :	Hermann Goering (later Secretary of Aviation)
Secretary for Unemploy- ment :	Dr. Gereke.

Parallel appointments in Prussia were : Herr von Papen, Prime Minister ; Goering, Minister of the Interior ; and Hugenberg, Minister of Trade and Agriculture.

Thus apart from Hitler there were only two of the leading National Socialists in the cabinet, Frick and Goering. Dr. Guertner, who had been taken over from the Papen Government, must also be counted because his sympathies were all on the side of Hitler. By way of compensation Papen's former Government was represented by Papen himself, Freiherr von Neurath, the Foreign Minister, Graf von Schwerin-Krosigk (Minister of Finance, who, by the way, at present holds the same position in the Reich), and Eltz von Rubenach, the Minister of Transport. The alliance with Hugenberg and the Stahlhelm was represented by Hugenberg himself, who united in his person the economic ministries of Prussia and the Reich, and by Seldte, the leader of the Stahlhelm, who received the Ministry of Labour.

Hindenburg had placed Dr. Gereke in the cabinet as Secretary for Unemployment. He was one of Hinden-



THE HITLER-PAPEN CABINET, JANUARY 31, 1933.

*Right to Left : (seated) Papen, Hitler, Goering ; (standing) Hugenberg, Blomberg, Frick, Schwerin-Krosigk, Giercke, Selbke.*  
The attitudes of the three chief persons are significant.

burg's particularly loyal followers, and had always been a thorn in the flesh of the National Socialists. A few weeks later the Gestapo arrested him on the ministerial benches for some illusory offence, and he was taken to a concentration camp.

General von Blomberg's appointment to the Ministry of Defence instead of Schleicher was very interesting. Blomberg passed as the most democratic of the generals; it turned out however that his sympathies were with Hitler. Herr von Reichenau, then only a colonel, but now one of the leading commanders of the German Army, was an ardent admirer of Hitler. The fact that it was this man whom Blomberg took with him to Berlin (both came from the Koenigsberg command) led to the conclusion that he desired to place the Reichswehr completely at the service of National Socialism.

Hitler was closed in by such a tight ring of sentries—Papen, Hugenberg, Neurath and Seldte—that at first at any rate the danger of a despotic use of power appeared slight. Papen was singled out for special duties. Now as ever he had the President's confidence, he was to be a liaison officer again, his powers were very far-reaching, and he was able to imagine with some justification that in this new Government he certainly had some say.

### *Goering Rules*

The facts were otherwise. The moment Hitler and Goering had come to power nobody outside the N.S.D.A.P. had any more say in Germany. Least of all, strange to relate, Herr von Papen, the Vice-Chancellor and Prussian Premier. To all intents and purposes Hermann Goering, 'Minister without Portfolio' and Minister of the Interior for Prussia, took over.

Goering's point of view was not Papen's. He did not think that time was necessary for carrying out one's programme. On the contrary. The quicker he could pass through legislation of the thorough variety the better it suited him. For Goering succeeded much better

than Hitler in seizing for himself the whole power in the State.

Papen was Prime Minister of Prussia, Goering was his Minister of the Interior. Goering should have obtained the consent of his superior, Papen, in any and every case. But he cared not a jot what Papen would say about the decisions of his subordinate. He carried on with absolute arbitrariness, and in most cases without Papen's having the least inkling of what was afoot. And his every deed was biased in favour of National Socialism, and consisted in doing what appeared to him necessary for occupying points of advantage. He openly declared that he did not think of retaining that 'ridiculous impartiality' with which politics had been carried on hitherto in Germany and in other countries. For him the Party alone existed, and everything was tolerated which was for its benefit. In one of his great speeches in the spring of 1933, Goering said quite openly :

'As far as we are concerned, the Nation is divided into two parts: those who belong to National Socialism and those who oppose us. I am not impartial and I do not propose to be; on the contrary, I intend to be partial. I stand by National Socialism, and I fight everything else. . . . I am in the habit of shooting from time to time; and if sometimes I shoot beyond the mark, I have at least shot.'

Starting from this principle Goering first set about placing the police force in Prussia completely in the hands of the National Socialist Party. Twenty-two of the thirty-two police chiefs in Prussia were immediately dismissed. They were replaced by trusty Party officials from the N.S.D.A.P. In the same way hundreds of police officers and thousands of the rank and file were dismissed at a moment's notice, and favoured S.A. and S.S. men took over. An auxiliary police force was established, consisting nominally of eighty per cent National Socialists and twenty per cent Stahlhelm. Actually almost all the personnel of this troop were National Socialists, and in Prussia alone it was some fifty thousand strong.

Goering's notorious 'shooting permit', likewise issued

without Papen's consent, aimed at justifying the police or, to give them their real name, the National Socialists in using firearms on any occasion when it was against the enemies of the Party: and, vice versa, the least offence against 'the Party' was to be requited a thousandfold. The whole system cannot be more clearly demonstrated than by the fact, published by the National Socialists themselves, that between 1st February and 5th March 1933, fifty-one opponents of National Socialism were shot, whilst the National Socialists with gross exaggeration place the number of victims among their own ranks at eighteen.

The methods employed in Prussia with unheard-of brutality and ruthlessness were similarly used in the Reich by Dr. Frick, Minister of the Interior. On the model of the police force, the ministries and the middle and lower positions in the civil service were filled with National Socialists.

It would take too long to recount here all the details of that troublous time, so distressing to the German people. We can only include everything which has some immediate relation to the person of Herr von Papen. For although he was Vice-Chancellor, all such events as the Reichstag fire, the dissolution of the parties, the expansion of the S.A. and the Gestapo, as well as numerous other acts, went on over his head and were even partly directed against him. There could be no question of Papen's playing a really important part as an intermediary in touch with Hindenburg. He did, it is true, take part in cabinet discussions, but the most important decisions were taken by Goering and Frick without asking the cabinet's advice.

There are no indications that Papen seriously bestirred himself to counteract this violation of law and unconstitutional behaviour. Only when immediate danger to himself or Hindenburg threatened to develop did he arouse himself sufficiently to take counter-action.

When in the middle of February the excesses of the S.A. in the streets became too violent, Papen and Hugenberg made representations to Hitler calling upon him to put an

end to this kind of thing. On the 22nd February 1933, Hitler found himself obliged to issue a decree against these transgressions. The conduct of these bullies was certainly condemned, but Hitler could not forgo mentioning in the appeal that 'the provocative elements among opponents were to blame for these excesses'.

### *In Defence of Hindenburg*

After the Reichstag fire there was the greatest disharmony in the cabinet. Goering, who was well aware that a public trial of the alleged incendiaries would only lead to a great exposure, urged with all his energy that his five scapegoats should be executed immediately without trial. He was of the opinion that in this way the world would be more easily convinced that the Reichstag had been set on fire by Communists and not by National Socialists. At this period Papen and Hugenberg were not completely intimidated, and they succeeded in passing a resolution at a ministerial council that a regular trial was to be held over the affair of the fire.

Goering raved at this decision. He appeared to have the intention of carrying out an immediate *coup de main* with the assistance of the S.A. At any rate it leaked out that on the 4th March 1933, the day before the new elections, the S.A. were to parade in all parts of Germany and improve the occasion by risking a putsch. It transpired that Hitler intended to make use of the opportunity to take Hindenburg prisoner, and compel him to transfer to the National Socialist Party, 'constitutionally' so to say, all those powers which otherwise it would have to win piecemeal.

Goering had found a label for this day: it was to be the 'day of the awakening nation', and in this very label there was a veiled threat against all opposition.

Papen, now backed by Hugenberg and the Stahlhelm, got wind of events and immediately mobilised the armed Stahlhelm. His original idea was to place Hindenburg in safety in the Doeberitz military camp, but Hindenburg did not think with him. Before the S.A. could march into Berlin the Stahlhelm mustered powerful cohorts there and flung a

dense cordon across the Wilhelmstrasse, so that a *coup de main* in the Presidency was made impossible. Papen had called out the Stahlhelm in the rest of Germany, but the S.A. wished to avoid strife and so the 'day of the awakening nation' passed almost without bloodshed, and certainly without a putsch. Wherever National Socialism was met energetically and with armed force it withdrew and waited for better opportunities which could be used with less risk.

It must be briefly noted here that in the elections of the 5th March 1933, that is at a time when all the expedients of State power were at their disposal, the National Socialists were quite unable to win a majority in the Reichstag. For the other parties were still allowed to exist, and this election was the last occasion to date on which a free expression of opinion was possible for the whole German nation. Notwithstanding the fact that the Communist Party was already banned, almost as many votes were given to the Communists as previously, and the Social Democrats nearly maintained their hold.

The disarming and disbanding of the 'Reichsbanner Schwarz-Weiss-Rot' took place a few days later. The Stahlhelm suffered the same fate in the middle of April 1933. On the 22nd June the Social Democrat Party was banned, on 28th June the German Nationalist Party and on the 5th July 1933 the Zentrum Party. Then, on the 14th July 1933, a law was made which decreed that the National Socialist German Workers' Party was to be the only party in Germany.

Thus Papen and Hugenberg could not prevent the destruction of their own parties. They could not even prevent the undermining of their own position nor violent changes in the cabinet in contravention of Hitler's word of honour. The arrest, on the ministerial benches, of Gereke, the Secretary of State, has already been referred to. But Papen found himself, a bare ten weeks after his appointment as Vice-Chancellor and Prussian Premier, obliged to relinquish one half of his authority, without being able to defend himself in any way.

*Surprise in Rome*

As the National Socialists had no use for Papen as Vice-Chancellor, he was always employed when there was a question of obviating conflict with the Catholic Church. As early as March 1933, an open conflict of this nature had broken out between the National Socialists and the Catholic and Protestant bishops, because the S.A., whenever possible, took measures against the churches and their institutions. Papen, a Catholic and papal chamberlain to boot, was dispatched to the German bishops in his capacity as a member of the Government to persuade them to comply with the demands of the N.S.D.A.P.

As this mediation of Papen's only eased the tension for a short while, the Government decided at the beginning of April to send him to Rome with the object of initiating fresh negotiations with the Pope himself. This was to give Papen the opportunity of soliciting the Pope's help in another matter : Dr. Dollfuss, the Austrian Chancellor, who was a strict Catholic, must be made to give up his resistance to National Socialism.

But Hitler did not trust Papen. Especially when his mission was outside the range of the National Socialist Party. He therefore deputed Goering, who was officially Papen's subordinate, to fly to Rome at the same time in order to keep an eye on Papen, and also to start negotiations between the National Socialist Party and Mussolini.

Opinion in Italy at that time was by no means friendly to Hitler. It was considered very peculiar that Papen and Goering were sent at one and the same time, and that two men who belonged to the same Government had such completely different views and almost always contradicted each other.

And then came a very painful surprise. When Goering, who at that time was Minister of the Interior and Commissioner for Prussia, landed in Rome, a telegram from Hitler was handed to him. It was addressed to 'Prime Minister Goering' and read as follows :

'I appoint you Prime Minister of Prussia as from to-day



(10th April). Please take over your duties in Berlin as from 20th April. I am happy to be able to give you this token of my confidence in you and gratitude for the great services you have rendered to the German people during the past ten years in which you have been a fighter in our movement for the regeneration of Germany. I thank you, too, for your services as Commissioner for Internal Affairs in Prussia, in successfully carrying through the National Revolution, and above all I thank you for the unique loyalty with which you have bound your destiny to mine.'

Now Herr von Papen was still Prussian Premier. Hitler had made use of his absence in Rome to put Goering in his place without waiting for his yea or nay. A greater affront could hardly have been offered a Cabinet Minister.

But Papen, who clung to his Vice-Chancellorship, swallowed the insult and stayed on as a member of the Hitler Government.

Needless to say, his mission to the Holy Father advantaged him nothing. He gave in Hitler's name far-reaching assurances which Hitler of course never kept. The consequence was that Papen's relations with the Church were later very troubled. Up to the present he has thrown in his lot with the Hitler régime without facing up to the anti-religious tendencies of the National Socialists, and therefore religious circles have lost the last atom of respect for this papal chamberlain, and have placed him on an equal footing in every respect with the National Socialist anti-Christians.

At first, however, Papen still zealously endeavoured at least to preserve good relations with the Church, as an asset for his activities in the German Government, while he clung to his post in spite of all exposures. He appeared to hope that he could step into Hitler's shoes when the latter had played himself out.

### *Papen makes Speeches*

Very naïvely Herr von Papen indulged the hope that he could succeed against Hitler in the same way that he had done against Brüning. As Vice-Chancellor he had no real

occupation. But he liked his name to be in everyone's mouth and so he began again to make public speeches.

In the first of these a mild discontent was perceptible, a desire, as it were, to drop hints in public regarding possible improvements in the system. One of his pet themes was his demand for 'the release of creative energies'. He wanted in this way to counteract the compulsion in the National Socialist methods of government and education. In one of his speeches (drafted by Edgar Jung) made on the 28th May 1933, in the Beethoven Hall at Bonn, Papen said :

Liberal freedom, instead of creating the hoped-for community of the people, has dug the deepest of social gulfs. For almost two generations we have suffered under a paralysis of the national will, due to this game with the masses. It is true that the National Socialist movement, thanks to its passionate, self-sacrificing tenacity of purpose, has succeeded in inspiring the masses with its ideas and in winning them for the State. But it would be criminal to hand over the future once more to the free play of these forces. And the game would be a dangerous one if the inner unity of a nation were to be re-established merely by means of an educational dictatorship. For the general nationalisation of a people does not by itself offer any final guarantee of national cohesion. That can only be attained by an education which brings to life in individuals the sense of national community and membership of a State. This, however, is only possible by a free decision ; no compulsion will produce it. The German must experience to the full the worth of his nationality and his history ; he must subordinate himself to his own people of his own free will, because he knows that he was born of God to serve the German nation.

This and similar speeches had no effect whatsoever on Hitler, chiefly because he was incited against his own Vice-Chancellor by Goering and Goebbels, whose personal hatred of Papen extended back to his Chancellor days. The cold-shouldering of Papen reached an inconceivable pitch in the spring of 1933, and he was actually only called upon when

it was a question of pacifying agitated members of the Church.

Even in this sphere there were grotesque attacks upon the Vice-Chancellor. On the 11th and 12th June 1933 an assembly of the Catholic Artisans took place at Munich. Papen took pride of place among the speakers. He declared that ideas of a class-war should be superseded and communal order re-established. He broke a lance for the Church, and expressed his opinion that the whole nation, which included the National Socialists, should respect belief and Christianity.

As the representatives at the meeting began leaving the hall where the Vice-Chancellor had made his speech, bands of the S.A. fell upon them and beat them in accordance with all the known rules of the art, and all because they wore orange-coloured shirts instead of brown. Finally the S.A. even burst into the Assembly Room where Papen had been speaking, and pulled the shirts off the backs of the Catholics. Cardinal Faulhaber, the Archbishop of Munich, thereupon left the chair and the session was immediately terminated. But this did not stop the S.A. from inflicting still further violence on those who were leaving.

Despite this, Hitler did not want open war with the Church. He knew that to have the Church as an enemy would considerably weaken his position in Germany, where the south was Catholic almost to a man. At the end of June 1933, the very time when all parties in Germany were dissolved and Hugenberg left the Government in disgust, Vice-Chancellor von Papen was again dispatched to Rome, with the object of concluding a new Concordat with the Pope.

On this occasion his reception was not very friendly, for Dr. Kaas, the former leader of the Zentrum Party, an old opponent of Papen, had received an influential papal post. Yet on the other hand it was Kaas himself who wished to avoid a breach between the Church and the German Government, and it was he who drew up a draft Concordat which after some amendments was signed on the 8th July by the Holy Father and Papen. By this treaty the Church

abandoned some important positions, but hoped thereby at least to preserve her remaining rights. There is no need to mention the separate points of the Concordat for they are not essentially connected with the fortunes of Papen. But it must be stated that both as German Vice-Chancellor and as a representative of the Catholic Church he once again set his seal on an agreement which he knew well enough Hitler would never keep. In fact, immediately after it was signed the Concordat gave rise to a violent quarrel over its interpretation. The final result was that the German Government did not feel in any sense bound by the agreement. They made a public disavowal of Papen, and following the conclusion of the Concordat their policy towards the Church was in no way more conciliatory than before.

## CHAPTER 13

### *Papen's Marburg Speech*

#### *The Vice-Chancellor's Circle*

The exclusion of the Vice-Chancellor from the Government reached the height of the ridiculous in the latter half of 1933 and the first half of 1934. The bulk of the Conservative ministers who had entered the Government with Papen either no longer wished to be associated with Hitler's power politics or else had deserted him. Hugenberg, for example, had enough pride left to resign all his offices. This was on the 27th June 1933, the day that the German Nationalist Party was dissolved. He still remained a member of the Reichstag, and was occasionally present at the infrequent sessions called by Hitler for the purpose of inflicting his speeches on the deputies. Apart from this he had retired completely, and became an embittered and reserved man. Inwardly he was violently at odds with Hitler. He, at least, made a dignified exit. Franz Seldte, the leader of the Stahlhelm, watched the destruction of his organisation without a murmur. He embraced National Socialism, and then part of his force was, for a short time at least, ranged as the S.T. group beside the S.A. and the S.S. From the middle of 1933 Seldte was classed as one of Hitler's partisans. Secretary of State Gereke was arrested by the Gestapo, and Herr von Bismarck, another Secretary of State, was groundlessly dismissed a few weeks after Hitler took over.

Papen made no dignified farewell, nor had he any intention of renouncing his position of his own accord. Hitler drove him perforce into the arms of the Catholic Action, and there he sought to ally himself with some courageous politicians. Among Papen's closest intimates at this time

were Dr. Erich Klausener, a Privy Councillor and the leader of the Catholic Action, and also Dr. Edgar Jung and Dr. Werner Schotte the authors and publicists, all of whom have repeatedly been mentioned. Then there was Papen's press chief, Herr von Bohse, who came from the Catholic Action, and Herr von Detten, his confidential secretary. All these men hoped that their influence would succeed in winning von Papen for the drive in favour of Catholic Action, and possibly even in setting up with his help a new power in Germany.

### *Hitler in Difficulties*

Goering was playing the strong man and thrusting all opposition to the wall ; Dr. Goebbels was already Minister of Propaganda, and was spraying his poison over the whole of Germany ; but despite this the position of Hitler and the National Socialist Party was far from being established. In spite of the effective campaign against unemployment the economic difficulties of the Hitler Government had increased enormously within the year. There was as little question of a cure of the state-economy as there was of an improvement in economic relations abroad. Much more dangerous, however, was the fact that Hitler had lost the actual leadership of the Party, for on the one hand Captain Röhm was aiming at a new revolution with his S.A., and on the other the Strasser wing was demanding a union with the working classes. A number of Unterführer (sub-leaders) refused obedience to Hitler. There were daily reports of violence which sensibly shook Hitler's position as Party Leader. In addition to this, part of the Reichswehr was openly opposed to Hitler, and all of it to the S.A. and their excesses. The petty jealousies among the leaders led to most grotesque surprises ; and strained relations with the Church increased the difficulties considerably.

All that National Socialism had to register in the way of positive successes as a result of its first 18 months of domination was the suppression with violence of the provinces and the parties, and an improvement in the labour market, due

to rapid rearmament. This was at home. In the field of foreign politics there was a ten-year non-aggression pact with Poland which represented a relief to the eastern frontier.

### *Hindenburg's Successor?*

A growing uncertainty was now abroad because President von Hindenburg began to sink, and in the early summer of 1934 it was already clear that the old man, now over eighty-six, had only a few weeks to live. So serious were the signs of decay in his intellectual faculties that one could hardly expect real decisions from him. The question of the succession was an open problem, for in view of the Reichswehr's attitude and the difficulties with the S.A., neither Hitler's candidature for the presidency, nor indeed that of any other National Socialist, could by any means be regarded as a foregone conclusion.

This provided a subject for speculation for Papen and his circle. They were forced to admit that it was no easy matter to put Papen in Hitler's place as Chancellor, for National Socialism had already settled down there too well. But there was a chance that he could be placed in the President's seat in succession to Hindenburg. First, it was known that Hindenburg had always had a soft spot for Papen, and would certainly be pleased to know that a man of his choice was to be at the head of affairs in Germany after his death. Secondly, the Reichswehr would be more tolerant of Papen than they would of a National Socialist President. Thirdly, Catholic Action backed him, and, fourthly and lastly, in spite of his mistakes and the weaknesses which were apparent in his character the middle class and the conservatives would rather see him President than they would perhaps Hitler or Goering. '*Unter Blinden ist der Einäugige König*' (Among the blind a one-eyed man is King) runs a German proverb. And in that gallery of criminals, so blindly National Socialist, Papen after all still had his one eye.

Besides Papen there was another who had tasted power, and now laid claim to the succession : and he was Hitler's

and Papen's most rancorous enemy, General von Schleicher. Schleicher had all along been the Reichswehr's spoilt child ; he had taken no part in the Hitler-Papen Government, and had in fact attacked it. Consequently his reputation was unstained by the violent measures of the first eighteen months of National Socialist domination. On the other hand, one could assume that the National Socialists would be more inclined to suffer Papen as President because he had been in league with Hitler, whilst General von Schleicher was best known as a violent adversary of the N.S.D.A.P.

The point now was, which of these two men would succeed in catching the eye of the whole German nation by some special exploit, and so have the best chance in the imminent elections.

The final result of all these speculations was that Klausener, Jung and von Bohse compelled Papen to make a great speech. This was in the middle of June 1934. In prudent terms this speech was to expose the faults of the reigning system and at the same time unfold a new programme for the future. As Papen had only his name and his voice to offer, Klausener and Jung declared themselves ready to draft a speech for him which would not only be perfect in form, but would put into words all the longings of the nation amidst the disappointments and discontents of the moment.

This was the origin of the famous Marburg speech.

Simultaneously it was to open the canvass of Papen's claims to the post of President, and, like a new Lutheran thesis, to be nailed to all the church doors in Germany.

The composition of this speech had cost the Catholic Action Party weeks of headaches, but the result was a masterpiece, and if Herr von Papen had really written it, it would have been a sure proof of his intellectual prowess.

The speech endeavoured to flatter Hitler and to single him out from the crowd of other National Socialist politicians, but at the same time it contained very clever and biting attacks on Goering, Goebbels, Rosenberg and Captain Röhm. Goering was charged with Byzantinism and a





DR. ERICH KLAUSENER, CHIEF OF THE CATHOLIC ACTION IN GERMANY,  
AND PAPEN'S BEST FRIEND.

Murdered by the Gestapo on June 30, 1934.

limitless greed for power. The lying propaganda of Dr. Goebbels was scourged as injurious and reprehensible. Dr. Rosenberg was taken to task for his clumsy religious treatises. The attempt at a new revolution planned by Captain Röhm and his S.A. was publicly exposed. There was a sop for the intellectuals where the speech said that lack of intelligence (noticeable in the bulk of the National Socialist leaders) conferred no right to denounce and persecute intellect. Naturally the authors of the speech upheld the Catholic religion and freedom of speech, and condemned in unmistakable terms the totalitarian pretensions of the Party.

Papen and Klausener imagined that the speech would be published word for word in all the newspapers, and they had special prints of it made in order to distribute it by the million in all parts of Germany.

If someone other than Herr von Papen had made this speech, a man, that is, whose words were backed by real power, then in all probability it would have marked the turning-point to a new epoch. But Papen had neither the courage nor the resolution to carry it off, and so the result was the opposite to what was intended.

### *Papen's Speech*

Here is the text of Papen's speech, which was delivered in the university at Marburg-on-Lahn, on 17th June 1934.\*

On 21st February 1933, in the stormy days when National Socialism had just seized the reins in the Reich, I endeavoured to elucidate before an audience of Berlin students the meaning of this epoch-making change.

Speaking on a site dedicated to the search for truth and freedom of thought I guarded myself against being taken for one who espoused the liberal conceptions of

\* As is explained in the next chapter, this speech was immediately suppressed by the National Socialists, and publication, even of abridged versions, was strictly prohibited. It is believed that the complete translation given here is the first to be published anywhere in Europe.

truth and freedom. For the ultimate truth, I said, lies only with God and the search for truth receives its ultimate meaning only when starting from that recognition.

To-day, once again privileged to speak on academic ground—in this medieval gem, the town of St. Elizabeth—I would hark back to that former exposition of mine. I emphasise now in addition that, though the ideal objective of truth may be in dispute, there rests with us the duty of subjective truthfulness if we are not to renounce the most elementary foundations of human morality. This place is dedicated to science: therefore it appears to me particularly appropriate for testifying to the truth before the German people.

Demands that I should clarify my attitude towards contemporary events in Germany during the prevailing situation in the Reich are increasing and are becoming more urgent. It is claimed that, since I took no decisive part in the developments in Germany arising from the abolition of the Weimar and Prussian régime and the consolidation of the national movement, there rests on me the obligation of observing developments more carefully and acutely than most Germans.

I have no intention of avoiding this duty. On the contrary, my inward obligation to Chancellor Hitler and his work is so great—and so intimately am I attached to the renewal of Germany now in progress—that both from a human and a political standpoint, it would be a mortal sin not to say what in this decisive period of the German revolution should be said.

### *Eulogy of Hitler*

The events of the last year and a half have agitated the whole German people and stirred them to the depths. It seems almost like a dream that, from the valley of melancholy, hopelessness, hate and division we should have found our way back to the community of the German nation. The enormous tension which had developed since August 1914 has been relaxed: once again the German soul experiences a resurgence, as the glorious and yet so painful history of our nation, from the German Hero Sagas down to the trenches of Verdun and the

street battles of yesterday, passes in review before our eyes.

An unknown soldier of the World War, who with infectious energy and unshakable faith has conquered the hearts of his fellow countrymen, has set the German soul free. Together with his Field-Marshal he placed himself at the head of the nation in order to turn a new page in the German book of destiny and restore mental unity. We have experienced this reunion of minds in the intoxication of thousands, in the manifestations of the flags and festivals of a nation rediscovering itself.

But now, when the enthusiasm is lessened and our labour is demanding its rights, it is clear that a catharsis of such historical dimensions necessarily produces a slag from which it must purify itself. Defects of this sort occur in all the domains of life, material as well as intellectual.

The outside world, regarding us with disfavour, points its finger at these defects and interprets them as a serious process of disintegration. Let it not rejoice too soon, however. If we can develop energy enough for freeing ourselves from these defects, that will furnish the best proof of how strong we are internally and how determined to prevent any adulteration of the German revolution.

### *Against Goebbels*

We know that rumours and whisperings must be dragged out from the dark into which they have withdrawn. Open manly discussions would be of more service to the German people than, for instance, the present state of the German Press, of which the Reich Minister of Enlightenment and Propaganda [Dr. Goebbels] has asserted 'it has no longer any physiognomy'.

This defect is beyond doubt. The press would indeed be doing a true service in informing the Government where faults have crept in, where corruption is breeding, where grave mistakes have been made, where unfit men are holding office, where sins are being committed against the spirit of the German revolution.

An anonymous secret news service, no matter how efficiently organised, can never act as a substitute for this

task of the press. Editors are under a legal and conscientious responsibility, whereas anonymous purveyors of news are beyond control and are exposed to the danger of Byzantinism. When, however, the proper organs of public opinion do not clear up sufficiently the mysterious obscurity which at present seems to envelop German popular opinion, the statesman himself must intervene to call a spade a spade.

Such action should prove that the Government is strong enough to stand decent criticism—that it is mindful of the old maxim, 'Only weaklings suffer no criticism'.

If the outside world claims that liberty is dead in Germany, let it learn from the frankness of my exposition that the German Government can afford to make the burning problems of the nation the subject of debate. Such a right, however, can only be claimed by him who without reserve has placed himself at the service of National Socialism and has proved his loyalty to it.

These introductory words are necessary to show in what spirit I approach my task of giving an unreserved account of the German situation and German aims. Let me now shortly outline the situation I found when fate made me co-responsible for the conduct of German destiny.

Governmental authority was then in decay, incapable of stopping the disintegration of the nation's natural and divinely established self-respect. Leadership and energy were lacking to such an extent that there was aroused in the German people an even stronger desire for a strong hand. Opposition from combatants in the Great War and from youth was becoming irresistible. Corresponding to the splitting up into parties, there spread a fatal discouragement. Unemployment grew, and with it Social Radicalism.

That these evils could not be remedied by ordinary means but only by a mental and political turnover was realised not only by the Right-wing groups of the German people, especially by the National Socialist Party, but by all the best members of our nation not tied to any particular party. The way had been prepared for a reassessment of all values, particularly in the mental domain.

It is therefore inaccurate to twist a justified struggle against a certain sort of 'Intellectualism' into a fight against the intellect itself. The historical truth is that the necessity of a fundamental change had been realised and promoted even by those who shied away from a turnover through a mass party movement. Therefore the claim to a revolutionary or national monopoly by any one group seems to me to be quite exaggerated, apart from the fact that such a claim disturbs the new community.

At Breslau on 17th March 1933 I pointed out that in the post-war years a sort of Conservative revolutionary movement developed in Germany which was distinguished from National Socialism in essence only by its tactics. After the German revolution and its fateful consequences the new conservatism consistently repudiated any further democratisation and believed that the pluralistic forces might be eliminated from above.

National Socialism, on the other hand, first of all followed the methods of democracy to the end, to face at last the difficult question of how its ideas of unconditional leadership, absolute authority, the principle of aristocratic selection and the organic orderings of the nation could be effected. History has endorsed the soundness of the National Socialist tactics ; it was this recognition that induced the Conservative statesmen in the decisive hours of early 1933 to form an alliance with the National Socialist movement.

This complex of facts must be emphasised when zealous and occasionally all too youthful revolutionaries attempt to dispose, with the catchword 'reactionary', of even those who assumed the tasks imposed upon them by the development of the revolution in full recognition of its nature.

For the real politician only three fundamental standpoints are possible : he may fail to recognise the necessities of his period and may fail in consequence ; he may oppose the current drift and thus succumb ; but he may also make himself the champion of inexorable duty and thus fulfil the command of history.

Whoever has taken this last standpoint is above empty

catch-phrases, especially those about 'reaction'—which, moreover, are suspiciously reminiscent of the Marxist period, now, thank God, overcome.

But statesmen must also recognise a second consideration: that though an epoch-making change embraces and alters all manifestations and conditions of life, as against this vast background political events are merely a passing foreground and to them only can the concepts of politics be applied. Statesmen and politicians can reform the State, but not life itself.

### *Against the Mechanisation of Life*

The tasks of the reformer of life and of the politician are fundamentally different. Recognising this, the Leader declared in his *Mein Kampf* that the object of his movement was not a religious reformation but a political reorganisation of the German people.

It is impossible to organise all human life because then it would become mechanised. The State is a piece of organisation; life is growth. Undoubtedly there are between life and organisation inter-relations and inter-defects. But they have limits which cannot be passed without imperilling life itself.

It is the very essence of revolution that striving spirits turn against the mechanists. For this reason Bolshevism is not a genuine revolution of the twentieth century but is merely slave-driving aiming at a final mechanisation of life. The true twentieth-century revolution—as I said in my speech at Berlin University—is the rising of the heroic personality united to God against dead trammels, against the suppression of the divine spark, against the mechanisation and the collectivisation which are merely the ultimate degeneration of bourgeois liberalism. Collectivism is the individualism of the masses having no longer any regard for the whole but only for itself.

So a new era of sentiment is arising and growing within the nation, an era which mainly escapes the attention of anyone who stands himself at the turning-point. But a revolution is only, so to say, the political seal attached to a document presented by history itself.

A new human being, as a product of a new period,

simply grows; but the State must be fashioned by human reason. The State may also help in fashioning men, but it would be illusory to assume that fundamental changes in human valuations can be effected by State authority.

The State may favour, for example, a certain conception of history and encourage its consolidation, but it cannot command it, for it arises from a *Weltanschauung* which is rooted outside the governmental sphere. It also rests on exact research, disregard of which always avenges itself.

When I consider the problem of how to interpret contemporary history, I gleefully remember a question which my history professor used to put to me: 'What would have been the course of German history if Frederick the Great had married Maria Theresa?'

The meaning of the new era is clear: the issue lies between the believers and the unbelievers—whether all the eternal values shall become secularised and whether the profanations which started some centuries ago shall end by stripping from humanity its divine elements and thus disintegrate all culture, or whether belief in transcendentalism and an exalted world order shall again fundamentally recondition feeling, thinking and doing.

The political events of the German revolution unroll against this historical background. The task of the statesmen is to eliminate decayed forms and outworn values, to promote the eternal values struggling for new life and to place them at the foundations of governmental reconstruction.

Since the Liberal revolution of 1789 was a revolution of rationalism against religion and against permanent loyalties, it follows that the counter-revolution which is now in progress must logically be Conservative. But it can be so only so long as it does not rationalise but bases all life again on the natural laws of creation. This, I dare say, is the reason why Dr. Rosenberg, cultural director of the National Socialist Party, has spoken of it as a Conservative revolution.

For the political domain there result the following requirements:



The time for the emancipation of whatever happens to be the lowest class relative to the higher classes is past. The point is not, however, to hold down any one class. That would be reactionary. What is required, is to prevent any one class from seizing governmental power and raising totalitarian claims.

The latter would be a threat of permanent revolution and would destroy all the natural and divine order. The State is the sovereign centre of the whole nation, in which each class is biologically articulated and in which each individual occupies his proper place through natural selection. True sovereignty embraces the nation in its entirety and rejects every special claim of any estate or class.

If the objective of the German revolution is to become an example for Europe, that would mean finding a natural social order which would definitely terminate the class struggle for supremacy. True, the Government cannot be derived from any one estate or class. The principle of popular sovereignty, however, has always resulted in class domination of some kind.

Therefore the logic of the anti-democratic revolution requires that it should break with the principles of popular sovereignty and return to the principles of natural and divinely established governments. But this must not be confounded with depriving the people of their rights. Democracy, indeed, may develop into an anonymous tyranny, but tyranny, as is generally recognised, can never annihilate popular freedom.

I know how much the Leader desires that concern for a genuinely responsible and just Government should remain alive in the German people. Therefore I believe that at some time the German State will receive its crowning structure in a governmental headship which will for ever be removed from political struggles, from demagoguery and class conflicts.

Besides the need for establishing principles of sovereignty based on a higher responsibility and super-personal duration, there is the necessity for creating a new social order. The consciousness of this necessity stirs all the European nations which have experienced the profound

changes brought about by industrialisation, urbanisation, mechanisation and capitalisation.

There is no need to emphasise that this yearning for a new social order is particularly alive in Fascism and National Socialism. On the other hand, we recognise how immensely difficult it is to retransmute into a nation the masses which have lost interconnection with blood and the soil, particularly when a sound class attachment and establishment of rank have been lost in the Liberal period.

National Socialism, therefore, attaches decisive value to winning back these masses. This is chiefly to be effected by discipline and propaganda. The National Socialist system thus performs a function for which parliamentarism had become too weak—namely, the re-establishment of direct contact with the masses. Thus there arises a sort of direct democracy which succeeds in regaining the interest of the masses in the State.

But behind this temporary and limited end there is a much greater evolutionary goal—namely, the creation of a social order which will rest on universally valid principles and not merely on adroit domination of the masses. While the French Revolution created fundamental bonds in Parliament and universal suffrage, the goal of Conservative revolution must be to push forward to universally valid principles.

We in Germany have one single party in place of the multi-party system (which lately and justly has disappeared from Germany).

This I regard as only a transition stage and justified only so long as it is necessary for safeguarding the revolution and until a new selection of personalities begins functioning, for the logic of anti-Liberal development requires the application of the principle and organised formation of political sentiment, which must be based on the spontaneity of all the members of the nation. Only organic attachments can overcome the party system and create that free popular community which must be the goal of this revolution.

A further decisive element in the twentieth-century revolution is the end of cosmopolitanism, which came very near being the outcome of the Liberal belief in the

omnipotence of the world economic. Against this there is set the hope awakening, that almost metaphysical reflection on the sources of one's own blood, mental roots, common history and the living State.

Only now do we re-develop that healthy sense for historical oneness of body and soul, of language and morals, which by its very essence lies outside the governmental frame but is necessary for the State as a counterweight to it.

While in a natural democracy the people and the State coalesce, we have come to appreciate again the fruitful tension between the people on the one hand and the State on the other, by which energies are made available for the State and without which it would become an empty mechanism.

It follows that folk-consciousness differs from that nationalism which feels itself bound up with the National State. The latter leads to the mutual segregation of nations, to mutual laceration and thus, ultimately, to the Balkanising of Europe. But a strong folk-consciousness tends to recognise the sacredness of all peoples. A folk-awakening thus clears the road for super-national co-operation.

In my Dortmund address I pointed out that modern technology requires the creation of State and regional economic units; that Europe, in the sharpest competition with trans-oceanic continents, can at best maintain her standard of living only if her total cost of production can be reduced. The task of creating such a state of regional complexes as is demanded in the age of aircraft and the automobile lies by way of the sanctification of folkdom and of large-scale governmental agreements which will leave the several nationalities untouched and unmolested.

This, however, requires the voluntary surrender of State totalitarianism, which would recognise no natural growth of individual existence. Above all, it requires an understanding of the nature of a sovereign State, which latter, indeed, will not suffer any action against itself, but does not demand that everything should be done by the State.

*Against a Religious Conflict*

In thus outlining the goal of the German revolution I find myself in the very midst of the problems of the present situation, which, true to my introductory words, I cannot evade. The problem which I define as the fundamental problem of this epoch-making age, namely, the division into believers and unbelievers, affects also the discussion of political concepts.

A people has to decide whether it shall be religious or worldly. Historic logic demands that the Liberal worldly State of 1789 be followed by the religiously founded State of the German counter-revolution. But a religious State which rests on a living conception of God must not be confounded with a secularised State in which worldly values are put in place of belief in another world and decked out with religious honours.

Pertinent here is what Chancellor Hitler wrote in his book: 'I do not mind saying that I feel that those who nowadays attempt to draw the folk-movement into the crisis of a religious conflict are worse enemies of my nation than any internationally minded Communists.'

True, outward respect for religion represents some progress from the irrelevant attitude engendered by exaggerated nationalism. But we must not forget that true religion is devotion to God and not those substitutes which had been introduced, especially by the Marxian materialistic conception of history, into the consciousness of nations.

Now, if in many circles there is a demand for a uniform foundation for religious faith—a faith derived from the viewpoint of the totalitarian State and the complete amalgamation of the nation—let them not forget that we must regard ourselves as fortunate in having such a foundation in Christianity.

Let them also ponder whether the alleged crisis of Christianity really is, as is often claimed, the result of an obsolescent lack of vitality in the Christian Gospel or whether it is not rather due to the fact that rationalised and liberalised human beings have lost the inward capacity for grasping the mystery of Christ.

I am convinced that Christian teaching represents the

religious form of all Occidental thought and that in the reawakening of religious energies there is being accomplished a new saturation of the German people with a Christian treasure the ultimate value of which could scarcely be fathomed by men of the nineteenth century.

There is ahead of us a struggle to decide whether the new Reich will be Christian or lose itself in sectarianism and pseudo-religious materialism. The decision will be simple if the governmental power will abstain from any attempt to influence it in the direction of forcible reformation.

It must be admitted that there is a political element in the resistance in Christian circles to governmental or party intervention in Church affairs, but this is only because political intervention in the sphere of religion forces the persons subjected to it to reject for religious reasons totalitarian claims which are wholly unnatural in that domain.

As a Catholic, I have a full understanding of the principle that religious conviction resting on freedom of conscience should refuse to allow itself to be commandeered by politics.

### *Against Rosenberg*

Let nobody close his eyes to the fact that if religious troubles were brought on by force, energies would be loosed in which even the force itself would founder. Those circles which hope for a new 'racial religious union' would do better to ask themselves how they can conceive of the fulfilment of Germany's task in Europe if she is voluntarily to exclude herself from the community of Christian nations.

Any and every activity in Europe appears to me impossible under such circumstances. The fact of a common European culture and civilisation, toward which we have contributed so much, imposes its obligation despite all national individualisation. We must not close our frontiers spiritually and withdraw voluntarily into a ghetto.

The old conflict between Guelf and Ghibelline, running throughout German history, has revived and demands a

decision. Those who know what is developing in the best minds and loftiest souls in Europe to-day, have a definite feeling that a new Ghibelline party has begun to form, carrying within itself the ideal of that aristocratic fundamental conception of a nation of which the Leader speaks and which is energised by a longing for a happier world.

To be reformed, however, means to look beyond temporary advantages and prejudices and to strive for that sterner order which at all times and in all nations fills the longings of the best.

It is useless to hide from ourselves that certain gaps have opened between the early strivings and the everyday practice of the German revolution. There is nothing astonishing in that. To counter this danger, however, inquiry should be made into its causes.

They lie in the fact that in the German revolution, as has often happened in history, a mental turnover has coincided with the social one. Mental revolutions cry for an aristocratic conception of nature. A social turnover, however, is exposed to the danger of being influenced in a measure by the dynamics of Marxism.

Such a conjunction presents leadership with a gigantic task, the solution of which demands the utmost decision from a statesman. A similar historic situation was described by Conrad Ferdinand Meyer in his masterly story, *The Temptation of Pescara*, which he summed up by quoting Luther on the peasant wars: 'A man making history has two tasks. He has what his time demands, but beyond that—and that is his most difficult task—he stands like a giant against the upsurping froth of his century and hurls to the rear excited fools and knaves who would take a hand, exaggerating and degrading his work.'

### *Against the Sovereignty of one Party*

It is realised that this enormous task, which is always imposed upon a revolution, has yet to be performed in Germany. Leadership will have to keep watch lest a new class of struggle revive under new colours.

Leadership wants a united nation and, while fully

recognising national services, it therefore declines to divide people permanently into a privileged class and a class of lesser rank. Favouring such division would moreover not correspond with the almost 100 per cent profession of loyalty to the new State Leadership expressed by the German people on 12th November 1933.

It goes without saying that the supporters of the revolutionary principle will first of all also occupy the positions of power. But when the revolution is completed, then the government can represent only the totality of the nation. It must never be representative of special groups, for, if it were, it could not effect a popular union.

In this connection, it is necessary also to abandon false and romantic ideas unsuited to the twentieth century. Thus we cannot think of repeating the division of the people, on the ancient Greek model, into Spartans and Helots. In the end the Spartans had no choice but to hold down the Helots, and thus Sparta's power was weakened.

In a State resting on a true popular community, political battle-cries must ultimately be silenced. Selection indeed is necessary, but the principle of natural selection must not be replaced by the criterion of adherence to a special political doctrine. It was for this reason that National Socialism endeavoured to reach the goal of replacing the Party membership card by the test of human fitness and performance.

#### *Lack of Intellect confers no Title for Fighting Intellectualism*

On the other hand, nobility is bred in the spirit as well as in the blood. It will not do, therefore, to attempt to dispose of the mind with the catchword of intellectualism. Lack of intellect or primitive intellect confers no title for fighting intellectualism.

If in point of fact we have occasion these days to complain of 150 per cent National Socialist, those are no intellectuals who would deny the scientists of the world their reputations and their means of existence because they have no Party cards.

An intellect bred in nature and blood has character and is incorruptible. It has a conscience. To such a

mind respect for the nation is a matter of course. And a nation denies itself when it denies mind. Let us beware of the danger of excluding intellectuals from our nation and let us remember that everything great comes from the mind even in politics.

Also let nobody object that the intellectuals lack vitality without which the nation cannot be led. Rigmindedness is so vital that it will sacrifice itself for convictions. To confound vitality with brutality we reveal an adoration of force that would be dangerous any people.

The worst sort of individualism is the dominance catchwords. Thus there are persons fundamental Liberal who do not utter a sentence without misusing word liberalism. They characterise freedom as a Liberal concept, whereas in truth it is arch-Germanic. To attack equality before the law, which is pilloried as Liberal degeneration, whereas in truth it is the prerequisite of any just decision.

### *Against Goering*

These people suppress that basis of the State which only in Liberal but in all theories has been called just. Their attacks are directly against that security and freedom of private life which Germans have won in century of most strenuous struggle. The maxim that Men in History is also frequently misunderstood. Quite right therefore, the Reich Government frowned upon the glorification of individuals, which is the most un-Prussian thing conceivable.

Great men are not created by propaganda but grow until their deeds are acknowledged by history. Nor can Byzantinism cheat these laws of nature. Therefore, whoever speaks of Prussians should first of all think of unselfish service, and of reward and recognition only at the very last, and, best, not at all.

The education of the people in the service of the State is a self-evident necessity and may be initiated more rigorously because of the lax way in which it was promoted by the Weimar régime. But there should be no self-deception concerning biological and physiological limits.



Even force encounters a limit in the self-determination of real personality. Most dangerous are the reactions to coercion.

As an old soldier I know that the most rigid discipline must be supplemented by certain liberties. Even the model soldier, cheerfully subjecting himself to unconditional obedience, counts the days of his period of service because the desire for freedom is fundamental to human nature.

The application of military discipline to the entire life of the nation must therefore keep within such bounds that human nature is not offended. Every human being needs time for his family, for relaxation and for himself.

For this reason the Reich Minister of Education has ordered recently that Sunday shall again be a day for church and the family.

It is a wholly reprehensible notion that a people can be united through terrorism. The Government will counter any movement in such a direction, realising that terrorism is a sign of bad conscience and that it is the worst counsel for any leader.

True education must be rooted in moral principles, for truly moral principles can be mediated only by belief in a supreme world order. Patriotism, self-sacrifice and devotion are substantial only when rooted in an individual as a divine command.

### *The Danger of a New Revolution*

We must not fall, therefore, under the spell of polemical catch-phrases but take individual counsel. The Leader demands of his movement that 'it must never forget that all human worth lies in the individual value; that every idea and its performance come from the creative power of some individual and that admiration for greatness is not merely gratitude, therefore, but also a bond of unity between those offering thanks'.

I have outlined the problems of the German revolution and my attitude to it so sharply because there is no end of talk of a second wave which is to complete the revolution. Whoever toys irresponsibly with such ideas should not forget that a second wave might be followed by a

third, and that he who threatens the guillotine may be its first victim.

Nor is it clear where such a second wave is to lead. There is much talk of the coming socialisation. Have we gone through the anti-Marxist revolution in order to carry out a Marxist programme? For every attempt to solve the social problem by collectivisation of property is Marxism.

Would the German people be the better for it, would anybody be the better, except perhaps those who scent booty in such a pillaging raid? Social problems certainly exist. But they can be mastered only when property is again put under individual responsibility—not through making collective irresponsibility the ruling principle.

Neither must this be made the principle of any planned economy, which is an even greater departure from individual initiative and responsibility. Whoever has failed to discover that every form of collectivism produces inevitable corruption is blind to the facts.

No people can afford to indulge in a permanent revolt from below if it would endure in history. At some time the movement must come to a stop and a solid social structure will arise, held together by rigid administration of justice and uncontested governmental power. There is no upbuilding amid everlasting eruptions.

Germany must not embark on an excursion without a known destination, nobody knowing where it will end. History has its own clock. It is not necessary continually to urge it on. If a second wave is to break over Germany, it must not be as a social revolution, but as a creative completion of the work begun.

The statesman's task is to fashion a form of government with State and People as his sole care. The State is the sole possessor of power and the ultimate guarantor of what every citizen is entitled to: adamant justice. Therefore the State cannot tolerate dualism in the long run. And on the question whether dualism between the State and the Party in Germany can be satisfactorily resolved hangs the success of the German revolution and the future of our people.

The Government is well informed about all the self-

seeking, untruthful, presumptuous and unchivalrous attempts at making capital out of the troubles of the German revolution. Nor is the Government shutting its eyes to the fact that the great treasure it holds in possessing the German people's confidence is now imperilled.

### *Mistakes of Wrong Propaganda*

If one desires close contact and unity with the people, one must not underestimate their sagacity. One must return their confidence and not everlastingly keep them in leading strings. The German people realises the gravity of its situation, its economic distress, and discerns clearly the defects of many laws born of emergency. It has a keen eye for coercion and injustice and mocks at clumsy attempts to deceive it with whitewash.

No organisation, no propaganda, however excellent, would be able alone to maintain confidence in the long run. I have therefore all along held a different opinion of the propaganda movement against so-called critics. Not by incitement, especially of youth, not by threats against the helpless part of the nation—only by a confidential talking things over with people can confidence and devotion be maintained. The people are aware that heavy sacrifices are demanded of them. They follow the Leader in unshakable loyalty if they are permitted to co-operate in council and deed, if every critical word is not interpreted as malevolence, and if despairing patriots are not branded as enemies of the State.

When German submarines hit England's solar plexus the English Press pointed out the full extent of the peril. The result was that all Englishmen made a united front in defence. Just because Germany is now subjected to a spiritual and material boycott by the world, that English example is useful to show how solidly the relation between leadership and the nation must be built of confidence when it comes to the worst. People treated as morons, however, have no confidence to give away.

It is time to join together in fraternal love and respect for all our fellow countrymen, to avoid disturbing the labours of serious men and to silence doctrinal fanatics. The Government warns all those who will not see that

the Germans are a people among others in Europe, that the scanty goods we have saved must be preserved, that we cannot afford the wanton destruction of traditional values.

If we disown our cultural heritage, if we disregard and abuse our 1,000-year-old history and the 3,000-year-old history of our continent, then we shall miss the great chances again offered to Europe and to the nations of the twentieth century.

History is being made nowadays by people who smile pityingly down on a moribund Europe. If Europe would maintain her claim to world leadership she must not lose a single hour in devoting all her energies to mental rebirth and in burying paltry squabbles.

The world is undergoing tremendous changes—only a people disciplined and conscious of its responsibility can take the lead. We Germans can make our way to the position due to us if we will match intellect with energy, wisdom with strength and experience with readiness for action. History is waiting for us—but only if we show ourselves worthy of it.

## CHAPTER 14

### *Papen's Delivery from the Gestapo*

#### *Dr. Goebbels' Rage*

This speech of Papen's was made at Marburg-on-Lahn : in a crowded hall before an audience composed chiefly of intellectuals and conservatives. It lasted almost twice as long as he had anticipated, because it was punctuated at the end of almost every sentence by salvos of applause which indicated that the heartfelt arguments of Klausener and Jung had appealed to the large majority of the middle class and the Right.

But this audience, hardly a thousand all told, were the only people who were able to learn the full content of the speech. German newspapers were never allowed to publish it. Not even an abridged version was released to them. Even *Germania*, Papen's own paper, which had received and set up the text of the speech some time before, did not dare publish a word.

Dr. Goebbels, the master of the German Press, who had studied the speech the same night, had given strict orders that it was to be suppressed throughout Germany. If any one in defiance of this order were to publish it or to distribute copies of it, they laid themselves open to the gravest penalties. Moreover, Dr. Goebbels went into a frenzy when he heard of the attacks which had been made on him personally. He could not, and would not, suffer even the most insignificant extract from this 'shameful speech', as he called it, to be placed before the German public. Some of the Swiss and Austrian papers to whom it had been sent in advance were confiscated at the German frontier and their sale prohibited. Like a raving madman Dr.

Goebbels hounded down every copy and every trace of that speech.

Perhaps the most grotesque incident of all was that Dr. Rosenberg, who had been bitterly attacked himself, was obliged to publish an angry retort in the *Völkischer Beobachter* the next day. But although he sought to demolish the speech point by point, on Goebbels' orders, the original text of it was not once quoted, and so he seemed to be fencing with the empty air.

A few days before the speech Hitler had returned from Venice, where he had been on a visit to Mussolini. He had suffered a sharp rebuff at the hands of the head of the Italian Government. (At that time Mussolini's opposition to Hitler, on account of the Austrian question, was most marked.) On the evening of the speech the Führer had assembled his sub-leaders at Gera in order to discuss with them the course to be followed by events in Austria in the face of his failure. Papen's speech burst like a bombshell over the assembly. The disgust of the Right wing of the Party was very marked because Papen had likewise exposed the campaign against criticism. And references to Röhm's newly planned revolution enraged the Right radicals too, and they immediately swore to be revenged.

### *Hindenburg's Congratulatory Telegram*

To understand to the full the absurdity of the situation one must bear well in mind the fact that Papen was still Vice-Chancellor in the Government. Thus constitutionally he was the most powerful man after Hitler, the Chancellor. President von Hindenburg had moreover scanned the speech before it was read, and had approved it subject to some minor alterations. Immediately after the speech he sent Papen a congratulatory telegram couched in the warmest terms with the object of expressing his agreement with Papen's remarks.

Hitler had not been given a sight of the speech before it was delivered, neither had the rest of the National Socialists in the cabinet. This, overtly at any rate, was the angle of

approach from which Hitler levelled charges of bad faith and subversive activities against his Vice-Chancellor.

On the 18th June, the day after the speech, there was a highly acrimonious discussion between Hitler and Papen. Hitler accused Papen of damaging the reputation of the Reich Government and the Reich. Thereupon Papen produced Hindenburg's telegram and Hitler could see for himself that the loftiest figure in the Reich was not of the same opinion. Papen threw in his face Goebbels' 'tutelage', the confiscation of his speech and the vitriolic attacks on a member of the Government which had appeared in the *Völkischer Beobachter*. This article, however, had been written by Rosenberg in collaboration with Hitler, and the Führer acquainted Papen with the fact in no gentle terms.

Hitler would have been only too pleased if Papen had immediately handed him his resignation or if he himself had been able to eject him. But Hindenburg's congratulations were an obstacle, especially since Hitler had been ordered to Neudeck to report to the President on the failure of his Venice meeting with Mussolini. If there was anyone for whom Hitler had some respect it was the old President. And since in his Venetian report he was afraid he would not cut a very good figure he did not wish to invite Hindenburg's ire by dismissing his favourite. Hitler also knew that Hindenburg had expressed the wish that Papen should report personally at Neudeck. So with much gnashing of teeth Hitler not only had to give up any idea of dismissing Papen, but even had to promise him that he would keep Dr. Goebbels in check.

On the day of Papen's interview with Hitler, Goering made a speech. The original opinion was that this speech was aimed at Papen, but later it was realised that it was for Röhm's benefit. In this speech Goering also granted that there were certain grounds for discord, but he added threats which left nothing to the imagination. 'The application of new, perhaps radical revolutionary methods,' proclaimed Goering, 'would hardly bring an improvement. It is not our business to determine whether a second revolu-

tion is necessary. The first revolution was ordered by the Führer. If the Führer wants a second revolution we shall be ready in the streets to-morrow ; if he does not want it we shall suppress anybody who tries to make one against the Führer's will.'

On the 21st June, the same day that Hitler had travelled to Neudeck to report to Hindenburg, Goebbels took advantage of the absence of the Führer, who had advised him to ease up in his attitude to Papen, to make a savage attack on the Vice-Chancellor. He had some pretty pet names for Papen and his backers, who included Hindenburg, the industrialists and the Church. Here is a sample of Goebbels' art : ' Strutting little pygmies, vermin to pester us, scum, the lot of them ! The nation has not yet forgotten the days when these gentlemen ruled from their armchairs in the clubs. We have appropriated for ourselves the right to power because there was nobody else with a valid claim to it. No prince, no business baron, no bank magnate, no parliamentary grandee ! '

The next day, the 22nd June, Goebbels met Papen at a press reception. Hitler's orders were now in force, and smiling wryly the two men appeared to the assembly to be on the best of terms. They shook hands and sat and drank tea together in a box.

On the 23rd June Papen was summoned to Hindenburg at Neudeck. The old man showed his delight at Papen's speech, encouraged him to make others, and so proved once again how little inkling he had of the real goings-on and the disposition of power in his own Reich.

Actually, on the 24th June 1934, Papen did make another speech, this time to two thousand women from the Saar, who had assembled in Berlin. (One of Papen's posts at the time was that of Special Commissioner for the Saar.)

Although he was milder this time the speech was again suppressed by Goebbels. The first part of it was an outspoken eulogy of Hitler, but he could not restrain himself from declaring (egged on by Hindenburg) that ' There is still a lot to be done in the way of reconstruction, and this



is realised by no one better than the Führer and the Reich Government'.

As Papen had raised his voice again, Dr. Goebbels was not to be outdone. On the 25th June a caricature was published in Goebbels' *Angriff* under the caption 'It shall not be repeated'. A German soldier of 1918 is shown being stabbed in the back by a 'red' traitor; beside him a storm-trooper of 1934 is kicking in the face an old gentleman in a top-hat who is creeping up behind him and bears an unmistakable likeness to Herr von Papen.

And the very next day in a speech at Essen in the Ruhr Goebbels declared: 'The enemies of National Socialism sit not among the workers, but among the fine gentlemen, among those who see in our movement only a passing phenomenon. When the revolution broke out they came over to our side with flying colours, but when they saw that we did not receive them with open arms they retreated into their lairs. No one must believe that our enemies have crept into their rat-holes for ever. They sit inside them; but they are waiting for their hour to come. No one must believe that we are not aware of these enemies. If we leave them alone, it is only to get them out of their holes.'

*To help Papen means Death . . .*

And now the tragedy of 1916 to 1918 repeated itself. The tragedy that Papen's friends simply by their connection with him were doomed to die.

On the same day, 26th June 1934, that Goebbels said one must 'drag the enemy from their holes', death began to reap a rich harvest in Papen's circle. A pretext was easily forthcoming. Dr. Goebbels had forbidden not only the publication of Papen's speeches in the newspapers, but also the circulation of them in brochure form. Nobody must be in a position to read the full text of a speech of Papen's containing such acrid and justified criticism of National Socialism.

The secret State police (Gestapo) now came on to the scene.

On the orders of Goering and Goebbels houses were searched in every locality where there was a possibility of discovering prints of Papen's speech. It was known that Papen had commissioned a Catholic press to print the speech in brochure form. The press was shut, its proprietors arrested and all the printing materials were confiscated.

Papen's own office was thrice searched at night by the Gestapo. Even the Vice-Chancellor's desk was broken open and ransacked. They were hunting for addresses, for treasonable evidence against Papen, for the names of his collaborators.

On the morning of the 26th June six men of the Gestapo appeared at the house of Dr. Edgar Jung. They wanted to make a search for the banned booklets; and they found—the original text of the speech which had been made by Papen at Marburg on 17th June, composed by Dr. Jung and Dr. Klausener. Dr. Jung begged the gentlemen of the Gestapo for permission to go to his bathroom a moment to fetch a tooth-brush. This favour was granted him. On the wall of the bathroom in crazy capitals he printed the word 'GESTAPO'; then he was dragged off. No more has ever been heard of him.

The house of Dr. Werner Schotte, one of the founders of the Herrenklub, was searched, and the Gestapo dragged him off.

A number of other friends and confidants of Papen were visited by the Gestapo and arrested.

But this was only the beginning.

*—but Papen Escapes*

The real blood bath only took place on the 30th June 1934. This was 'the day of the great purge' in Germany, the day of the sacrifice of hundreds of victims, 1,172 in all.

It was the day on which Hitler, Goering, Goebbels and Himmler squared their accounts with all their enemies—with enemies in their own party, with the Junkers, with the Generals, with Papen and his circle, even with the enemies of the Bürgerbräu putsch at Munich ten years before.

Dr. Erich Klausener, the leader of the Catholic Action and joint composer of Papen's speech, was sitting in his office in the Ministry of Transport on the 30th June 1934. Two men in uniform burst into his room and told him he was under arrest. Klausener took it all for a misunderstanding, but politely said he would willingly accompany them to the police-station, in order to clear up the mistake. He got up from his desk to take his hat from the stand. At that moment two shots rang out. They hit Klausener in the back of the head. With his hat on he fell face downwards on the floor, and was left lying on the floor to bleed to death. Not until the next day was his corpse taken away and burned. In the meantime nobody had bothered about him.

Oberregierungsrat von Bohse, Papen's press chief, was arrested and taken away. Like Dr. Jung, he vanished without a trace. He was in charge of Papen's office and had a dangerous card index of all the leading politicians.

Herr von Detten, Papen's private secretary, was shot. A short time previously he had been placed in charge of a separate office with the title 'Office for Confessional Peace in Germany'; cause enough to clear him out of the way.

Another friend and collaborator of Papen's was Fritz Beck. He was the creator and manager of the Munich Students' House, which clothed and fed thousands of poor students, and procured them lodgings, books, fees and, in case of need, work. He was charged with having relations with the Catholic Action. On the afternoon of the 30th June he was detained at his house by a telephone call, and a little later two S.S. men took him away. On Monday, two days later, his body was found in a wood near by. He was only recognised by a papal order which he wore round his neck. His face was an unrecognisable mass.\*

On the morning of 30th June six men in plain clothes drove up to the villa of General Schleicher, the man who

\* Details of these and similar incidents can be found in Konrad Heiden's book *Adolf Hitler*.

had made Papen Chancellor. They rang, forced their way in through the door and shot him before the eyes of his wife. He died immediately. Another shot hit his wife, Frau Elizabeth von Schleicher, and half an hour later she breathed her last. In the meantime the six men had driven off.

At noon on 30th June Gregor Strasser was arrested in his office. It was not until a week had passed that his wife received an urn containing his ashes.

Papen's five most intimate colleagues, among them his two secretaries, Fritz Günther von Tschirschky und Boegendorff and Friedrich Karl von Savigny, and also Margarethe von Stotzinger, were arrested in Papen's own office. They were only released some time later after long-continued efforts on their behalf. Bohse and Herr von Detten were evidently shot in the meantime.

But Papen escaped.

#### *Sanctuary with the Reichswehr and Hindenburg*

How Papen escaped on that fatal day will never be certainly known. On the one hand it was declared he had got wind beforehand of his imminent danger, and had fled to the Reichswehr Headquarters. Not even the Gestapo dared to penetrate there. Another version made out that he was taken to the Reichswehr building by a subordinate who wished to put him in a place of safety before the order for his arrest was released. Whatever are the facts, it is certain that he found refuge in the Reichswehr building.

For a whole day Papen's whereabouts were unknown and the official communiqués did not mention him. It was not even known whether he was alive or dead. So many people, both innocent and guilty, were despatched at the same time that it was impossible in the first few days even to get hold of a list of the dead which was even fifty per cent reliable. In the official reports which were issued by the rump Government (Papen excluded) the name of Papen was at first not mentioned. One rather had the impression

that the pronouncements of Hitler and Goering were no longer communiqués of the Government, but partial statements by leaders of the National Socialist Party.

Only on the 2nd July, two days afterwards, did it leak out that Papen had been able to save himself in the Reichswehr building. Papen's house was surrounded by the Gestapo and the Reichswehr Headquarters were picketed by them.

During the course of the 30th June Hindenburg himself had enquired after Papen and expressed his particular wish that whatever the circumstances Papen's life must be assured. On the basis of Hitler's and Goering's reports regarding the plot which had threatened the continuity of the State, Hindenburg had no option but to send a telegram of congratulation to them on their successful protective action. But at the same time he demanded that a guard of honour was to be placed over Papen and was to be responsible for the safety of his person.

If it was flight that had saved Papen in the first instance, it was now, with greater force than ever, the interest of Hindenburg that came to the rescue. It is true that the old President was not able to prevent the murder or imprisonment of Papen's whole circle. Even the bulk of the Herrenklub were arrested, and quite a number vanished and were never seen again.

#### *Papen announces his Resignation*

On the 3rd July, three days after the blood bath, the first great cabinet meeting of the Government took place. Papen was not present at the beginning of the deliberations; he was still in the Reichswehr building, watched over by his 'guard of honour'. In the course of the cabinet discussion the question was naturally raised as to what was to happen to the Vice-Chancellor, who was still officially in office.

Thereupon the Vice-Chancellor was brought on Hitler's orders by car from the Reichswehr building to the Chancellery. He was in safe custody, accompanied by three

special detectives of the Gestapo, two in plain clothes and one in uniform.

He was not allowed to enter the room where the cabinet was in session, but was taken to an adjacent room where Hitler let him cool his heels for a while. Then Hitler visited the room, and had a discussion with Papen which lasted for a quarter of an hour. Unfortunately nothing of what was said at this encounter has ever been divulged ; but when Hitler returned to the cabinet room he vouchsafed the information that Papen had handed in his resignation. It is not known whether this resignation was given voluntarily or under Hitler's threats of death.

In any case, in the communiqué regarding the meeting which was issued on the 3rd July 1933, Papen's name was not mentioned. This communiqué concerns itself entirely with the decision of the Government relating to the great purge in the Party.

After his interview with Hitler, Papen was taken back by car to the Reichswehr Headquarters with his three companions. As he left the Chancellery he was recognised by the crowd waiting outside, which was predominantly National Socialist. A fortnight earlier (a few days after his Marburg speech), Papen on a visit to Hamburg was acclaimed by the crowd which recognised him. But on the 3rd July he was at first received in complete silence and then even hissed and booed. His escort hastened to lodge him once more in safe custody.

Papen's resignation by no means found favour with Hindenburg. Telegram after telegram was sent to Hitler demanding the reinclusion in the cabinet of this protégé of Hindenburg, or his employment in some similar capacity. In these telegrams Hitler was once again charged with bad faith. For the President recollected that Hitler, on his appointment to the chancellorship on 30th January 1933, had given his promise that he would undertake no reshufflings of the cabinet without the President's consent.

By this intervention of Hindenburg's not only was all personal danger to Papen removed, but on the 6th July he

could even put forward the demand that either his name should be publicly cleared or his case should be made the subject of an official trial. Furthermore, he demanded the release of those friends of his who had not yet been murdered.

The whole Papen affair in this way came, after all, to be an embarrassment for Hitler. The cabinet met again to deal with the Papen question. Whilst the radicals, principally Goering and Goebbels, were for taking proceedings against him, and so disabling him completely, Hitler and General von Blomberg had another solution, another use for Papen in mind. They could not so blandly ignore the last wishes of Hindenburg, who was meanwhile nearing his end. The cabinet pondered at great length what post Papen could best be side-tracked into. They thought of appointing him either Commissioner for the Saar, because he had connections and large possessions there, or liaison officer between the Government and the Church with some resounding title. Both proposals met with the insurmountable opposition of the radicals.

In the meantime Papen had to remain in custody. He was, it is true, granted greater freedom of movement, but he was not allowed to attend the burial of his friends. He only sent wreaths, as he had so often done for those who had been obliged to die for him. (A small detail must be mentioned here. The family of Dr. Klausener had announced in *Germania*, Papen's paper, that the interment of the mortal remains of their untimely dead would take place at a certain place at a certain time. But this announcement had to be cancelled, because the family never even received the body of the shot man, but only the information that it had been burnt. Those concerned could not risk handing over the murdered corpses to relatives, for they had mostly been so terribly mutilated.)

The decision regarding the future destiny of Papen was only reached three weeks later, when the former Vice-Chancellor, lately prisoner of the Gestapo, was, surprisingly enough, appointed German Envoy to Austria.

*Papen's Activities as Vice-Chancellor*

Franz von Papen as Hitler's Vice-Chancellor was a complete failure. This can be said without fear of misstatement, as a general summing up of his seventeen months' activity in the Government. He succeeded neither in preventing the capture of full power by National Socialism, nor in the preservation of the President's influence. How weak Papen really was is best demonstrated by the fact that he never understood how to use his own position of authority. He could counter neither Goering's brutality nor the craftiness of Hitler and Goebbels. In Hitler's Government he was nothing but a puppet to be pulled about hither and thither at will. More than that. He had not even the dignified protest of a Hugenberg to his credit, but allowed himself, fully conscious of his lack of power, to be used by Hitler to perform various services for the National Socialists. These were certainly of some importance to National Socialism, but only compromised Papen himself. And this is the most damning criticism that could be made of him. For it is almost despicable to cringe and do everything to curry favour with masters who spare one no sort of degradation or insult. This was more or less Papen's rôle in Hitler's Government.

In this post he showed himself as little creative as in those which preceded it. It is possible that any other average politician would have failed in face of Goering's methods of violence. But anyone else, instead of clinging so grimly to his position, would have made a worthier exit and a more effective protest.

The Marburg speech was the Vice-Chancellor's only real exploit in all those seventeen months. But even this exploit was a signal failure; in fact, worse than this, it was a blunder. For if Papen had been possessed of true political foresight and intelligence, then either he would have known that such plain speaking was bound to bring disaster to himself and his friends, or else he would have matched his words with deeds, and so not only have made his demands but taken steps to enforce them.



To make a speech as a responsible statesman which was not even allowed publicity, to make proposals which, since the power lay where it did, were a cry in the desert, was nothing less than a blunder. One might perhaps have excused Papen this if he had courageously pursued the convictions expressed in this speech. What he did, however, was to sacrifice all his friends, but prudently to save himself.

The Marburg speech was a masterpiece which bore witness to the intellectual talent of its murdered authors, Klausener and Jung. Unfortunately it in no way proved that Papen was a suitable man to make it or to press home its demands.

It is superfluous to remark that this speech had not so strengthened his position that he was proposed as a candidate at the presidential elections. He had, by blindly misjudging the real disposition of power, only prejudiced his already highly precarious situation and that of his whole circle. Papen's intervention in the early period following Hitler's appointment would not only have been possible, it was urgently necessary. But then he dawdled, just as he had dawdled over constructive measures during his chancellorship.

It is possible that in January 1933, what he had done for Germany and the whole world in bringing Hitler to power was not very obvious to Papen. But after the first few weeks of National Socialist domination, and most certainly after 30th June 1934, he simply must have recognised the enormity of his crime in the eyes of World History—the crime of assisting to the seats of power a horde of criminals.

But not even then did this man, by birth an aristocrat, by temperament a conservative and a clerical, feel the least hesitation in meekly serving this mortal enemy of all nobility, of every tradition, of every faith. It is this that lays bare his complete lack of principle. He was not ashamed to be the submissive slave of the corrupt system of National Socialism in order to keep himself in the limelight. His exertions delivered other innocent people to the scourge of

Hitler and Goering. Time and again he fell into disgrace, yet pushed his way back in order to win by fresh efforts a grudging smile of recognition from men who inwardly utterly despised him. And all for the sake of notoriety, and to sun himself in the rays of successes which brought in their train ever fresh calamities.

‘ One makes use of a spy, but one has no respect for him ’, so runs the dictum of many a government. The National Socialist Government has applied this dictum to Herr von Papen with merely a minor alteration :

‘ We make use of Papen, but we despise him.’

## CHAPTER 15

### *Envoy to Austria*

#### *Abortive Nazi Putsch in Austria*

The horror of the whole world at the bloody tribunals held in Germany between 30th June and 3rd July, 1934, had hardly subsided when a new and detestable National Socialist crime was reported. On the 25th July 1934 one hundred and forty-four disguised National Socialists had penetrated into the Austrian Chancellor's office in Vienna, and had murdered the defenceless Austrian Chancellor, Dr. Dollfuss. Simultaneously an attempt was made to seize by force of arms the Vienna Radio Company. From there the National Socialist putschists announced that the Dollfuss Government had fallen and a new Government under Dr. Anton Rintelen had been set up.\*

This radio announcement proved to be entirely wrong. It was true that Dr. Dollfuss, the Chancellor, had fallen into the hands of the National Socialist murderers, but the one hundred and forty-four putschists had been cut off in the Chancellery by the police and the military forces. There could be no question of a National Socialist Government's being introduced, and after the death of Dr. Dollfuss a new Government was formed in Austria under Dr. Schuschnigg and Prince Starhemberg, and this was anti-Hitler.

The putschists, shut up in the Chancellery, were forced to recognise the hopelessness of their situation, and sent to the German Embassy in Vienna. They begged the German Envoy, Dr. Rieth, to use his influence with the Austrian

\* Dr. Anton Rintelen must not be confused with Captain von Rintelen, whose sabotage activities are referred to in the first section of this book.

Government with a view to allowing them a safe conduct to Germany. They gave their assurances that nobody had come to harm in the abortive putsch. They were prudently silent over the fact that Dr. Dollfuss had died as a result of two bullets fired from the revolver of a putschist.

Naturally the German Government was well aware of all the putsch plans of the National Socialists. They had, in fact, been worked out largely in collaboration with the Party leaders in Berlin. But the Government could only have acknowledged the putsch if it had been successful, and since it had miscarried all that they were interested in was denying that they had ever had any connection with the putschists. It was therefore in the highest degree embarrassing to the German Government when their envoy, Dr. Rieth, who had previously negotiated on several occasions with the putschists, offered them his services now. Dr. Rieth made his way in person to the Austrian Chancellery, first negotiated with the putschists, and then with the representatives of the Austrian Government. Finally, with his co-operation an agreement was signed whereby the insurgents were given free egress on condition that no deed of violence had been committed by them.

Only when the Austrian executive re-entered the Chancellery and the insurgents had been escorted off was it discovered that the agreement with Dr. Rieth was null and void, since Dr. Dollfuss had been shot, and for absolutely no reason.

In the eyes of his superiors in Berlin Dr. Rieth had doubly incriminated himself. In the first place, his intervention had proved that the German Government was holding a protective hand over the murderers. Secondly, he had made an agreement which he knew *a priori* could not be fulfilled because one of the conditions precedent was lacking.

These were certainly sufficient grounds for the recall of Dr. Rieth from Austria, where he had already played a very ambiguous rôle.

The German Government went even further. The moment Hitler learnt of the failure of the putsch, he tele-

graphed, with unspeakable hypocrisy, that the German Government most deeply deplored and condemned the crime committed against Dr. Dollfuss. (On Hitler's entry into Austria in March 1938, Planetta and Holzweber, the two executed murderers of Dollfuss, were proclaimed martyrs of the National Socialist movement, and their bodies were placed in the tomb of their victim.)

Simultaneously the German Government informed the Government at Vienna that they had decided after the recall of Dr. Rieth, the former German Envoy, to appoint a special Minister Plenipotentiary 'for the restoration of normal and friendly relations between the German Reich and Austria'. This new representative was to be Franz von Papen, the former German Vice-Chancellor.

On the 26th July 1934 a personal letter from Hitler to Papen was published. It runs as follows :

BAYREUTH

26th July 1934.

MY DEAR HERR VON PAPEN,

As a result of the events in Vienna I have found myself obliged to propose to the President the recall of Dr. Rieth, the German Envoy in Vienna, because responding to a demand from Austrian ministers or from the rebels in Austria, he was ready to approve an arrangement between these two parties referring to the liberation and safe conduct of the rebels, without first consulting the Government. The envoy has thus without cause involved Germany in an affair which concerns Austria alone. *The outrage against the Austrian Chancellor, which was extremely regretted and strongly condemned by the German Government, has through no fault of ours helped to disturb the political situation in Europe, which was already unsettled.*

Therefore it is my desire to contribute if I can to a relaxation of tension in the general situation, and in particular to see the relations with the German Austrian State, which have been troubled for some while, restored to normal and friendly channels.

For this reason, my dear Herr von Papen, I ask you to accept this important task, for since our co-operation

in the cabinet you have possessed and continue to possess my fullest and most unbounded confidence.

I have therefore proposed to the President that you be appointed for a limited period, and on a special mission, as German Envoy in Vienna, retiring from the cabinet and being relieved of your office as Commissioner for the Saar. In this new post you will be directly under me.

I thank you again for all you once did to bring together the Government of National regeneration, and all you have done since then in common with us for Germany.

I am, yours very sincerely,

(Signed) ADOLF HITLER.

### *Papen is Unwelcome*

The Austrian Government was by no means enthusiastic over this selection. Firstly, the part that Papen had played in the past in America and Asia Minor was well known; and secondly, there were other special reasons for not welcoming this new ambassador in Vienna.

For in connection with the putsch in Vienna, on the 25th July, a rising had flared up in various parts of Austria, particularly in Styria and Carinthia. This had claimed hundreds of victims on either side. Within three days the Austrian Government, with the help of the army and the semi-military organisations of the Heimwehr and the 'Ostmärkische Sturmscharen', had succeeded in restoring order. After the liquidation of the rising, the auxiliary organisations made it their duty to lay bare the National Socialist hiding-places and probe the affair to the bottom. In particular, the 'Ostmärkische Sturmscharen', a Catholic organisation under the personal leadership of Dr. Schuschnigg, brought to light, as a result of house-to-house searches, some very remarkable material. For instance, at the house of a National Socialist in St. Urban, in Carinthia, three letters from Herr von Papen were found. Another letter of his was found in the possession of another National Socialist at Radweg, in Carinthia. It appeared from all these documents that Herr von Papen had connections with some of the National Socialists in Carinthia who were most implicated.

There thus existed a danger that he would develop these and other connections with illegal supporters of Hitler in Austria, and work wholeheartedly for National Socialism.

The Austrian Government, therefore, pondered a long time before they gave their consent to the appointment of Papen. They only decided on this step because Mussolini, who immediately on the first indications of an attempted putsch in Austria had marched his troops up to the Brenner Pass in defence of Austrian independence, had given his assurances that he would defend Austria not only against Papen's intrigues, but also against Hitler's aspirations.

It was not until the 7th August that the Austrian Government ratified his appointment.

On this occasion the *Manchester Guardian* wrote that Schuschnigg's hesitation was only too understandable. For 'as ex-Commissioner for the Saar, Papen failed to make his colleagues or subordinates pay attention to the feelings of that Catholic population. A signatory of the Reich's Concordat with the Vatican, he has failed to get his promises observed or ratified, and it has been reported that he has been rejected as the German Envoy to the Holy See.'

### *Hindenburg's Last Letter*

The only thing that led the Austrian Government to believe that Papen would not work wholeheartedly for Hitler was a letter which his old friend, President von Hindenburg, had written to Papen a few days before his death in connection with the new post. On the 2nd August 1934 the old Field-Marshal General died ; he was eighty-six years old. But three days before his death he had addressed the following letter to Herr von Papen.

If I am now appointing you to Vienna as diplomatic representative of the Reich, I am doing this in the firm hope that you will succeed in restoring normal and cordial relations with the kindred Austrian people. My best wishes accompany you for the accomplishment of this responsible task.

VON HINDENBURG.

This was the last letter which the President signed before his death. It once more proves the old Field-Marshal's steadfast love for the Papen who had been able to captivate him with his pleasantness and charm, but who never in any instance succeeded in accomplishing any of the tasks which Hindenburg gave him to do.

On the 15th August 1934 Papen landed from a triple-engined Junker aeroplane on the Aspern aerodrome near Vienna. The plane was one reserved for Hitler's private use, and the gesture was meant as the Chancellor's announcement to the world at large that no trace remained of the misunderstandings of the 30th June between himself and his former Vice-Chancellor.

Papen was accompanied by his two secretaries, Herr von Tschirschky und Boegendorff and Baron von Ketteler, and was met by representatives of the Austrian Government and the complete staff of the German Embassy in Vienna. At the very moment of his arrival he caused some resentment by giving his staff the Hitler salute, which was received with murmurs of indignation by the crowd that had gathered round the plane.

#### *Papen makes Empty Promises*

The next day Papen presented his credentials to Miklas, the President of Austria. Although he had the strict orders of Hitler to use all his energies with the object of slipping Austria into Germany's hands as soon as possible, yet on the 16th August he made the following declaration to the President :

Appointed to Vienna by the Reichschancellor as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary on special mission, I have the honour of handing your Excellency my credentials, which at the same time give notice of the recall of my esteemed predecessor in office.

In entering upon the honourable office of representing the German Government in Austria I am conscious of the high importance and responsibility which is implicit in



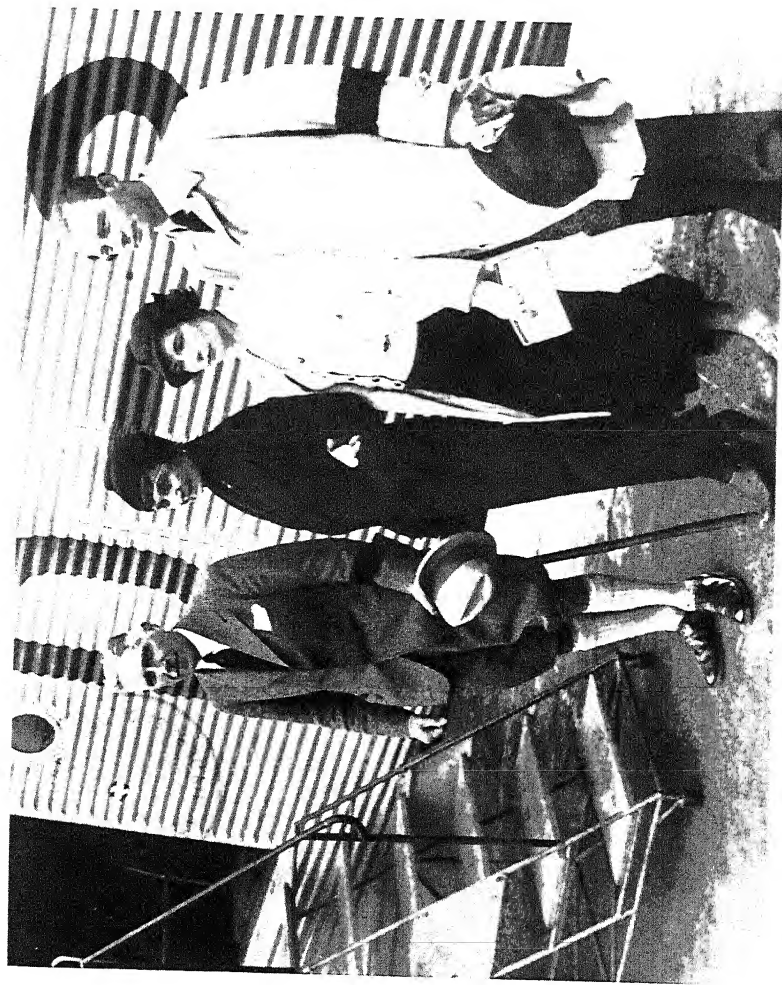
the office under the present circumstances. It is the desire of the Reich Government, and also the last wish of our late President, Field-Marshal von Hindenburg, to steer once again into normal and friendly channels the unfortunately troubled relations between Germany and Austria. It will therefore be my chief endeavour to apply my whole energies to the fulfilment of this wish, and so to contribute to the restoration of friendly feelings in our political relations, as befits our thousand-year-old community of race and culture.

I enter on this great task full of confidence, because I am of the firm conviction that the links between our two countries based on blood relationship and common history are indestructible, and further that co-operation in the intellectual, social and economic spheres is essential for European reconstruction. For this reason I cherish the hope that in all my activities I can count on the esteemed support of your Excellency and on the co-operation of the Austrian Government.

The intention of this address was to give expression to an unqualified recognition of the independence of Austria. To bolster up this impression, a communiqué was also issued in Berlin on the same day by the German Government, enlarging on Papen's speech. This is the text of it :

The German Government by their spontaneous action in Austria's period of disturbance have given proof that the integrity of Austria is in their view a self-evident matter, and that *the independence of Austria is not threatened by Germany.*

Nothing shows more clearly the duplicity of Papen's address and of the statement of the German Government on the 16th August 1934 than one of Hitler's brief official notifications on the 14th March 1938, three days after the entry of the German troops into Austria. This statement runs : 'Linz, 14th March 1938. The Führer and Chancellor has elected the Ambassador Herr von Papen, a member of N.S.D.A.P., and bestowed upon him the special Party decoration.'



PAPEN AND HIS WIFE, AND VON TSCHIRSKY AND HIS WIFE, LEAVING BERLIN FOR VIENNA ON AUGUST 15, 1934, ON PAPEN'S APPOINTMENT AS ENVOY TO AUSTRIA.

*The Evening*

That is, to secure election as a member of the N.S.D.A.P. Franz von Papen had betrayed a free and independent people to Hitler's jailors.

### *Papen at Work*

The way in which Herr von Papen took up office as envoy and practised his activities is interesting enough to be briefly described.

After presenting his credentials in Austria on the 16th August 1934 he first took quite a long furlough in order to recuperate. He spent it, as he had done so many other of his voluntary or enforced holidays, on his estate of Wallersfangen in the Saar. He deemed it prudent to let a little grass grow over the affair of the July putsch, and so he only returned to Vienna on the 3rd October 1934.

'Everything comes to him who waits' was also his motto in his later work. He took no direct step in Austria. It was in keeping with his disposition that he did not employ the customary method of procedure as an envoy. Papen passed hardly a quarter of his stay in Austria in the palatial Embassy in the Metternichgasse. He was almost always travelling; in Austria itself, or else in Hungary or Poland. He stayed in Germany for weeks on end to go hunting or to weave his political intrigues—one had the impression that Papen's chief occupation in life was the obliteration of every trace of his activities. One suddenly heard that he had left by air for Berlin, but three days later he bobbed up again somewhere in Hungary with Gömbös, the Hungarian Premier; then one read that he had been to France or Poland.

He gave receptions, of course. The German Embassy was thronged with very famous artists who were coquetting with the Third Reich. In the salons the artists offered their highbrow wares, while below stairs the political webs were spun.

At the beginning of October, when Papen actually started his duties, he had hardly spent a week at Vienna before he was off again, making a tour of the Federal State. He was

not interested in the countryside of Austria. Nor was he interested in those provinces which were staunchly behind the Schuschnigg Government. Naturally enough he sought out the districts where, in July 1934, the National Socialist rising had flared so fiercely, Styria and Carinthia to wit. He spoke in Graz and in Klagenfurt in the 'Deutsches Haus' and in the circle of the German colony. He sought to rally round him the spent forces.

For after the July rising the Austrian Government had succeeded in tracking down to their 'rat-holes' the members of the illegal organisation of the National Socialist Party in Austria, who were called for short the 'Illegals'. Innumerable nests of arms were discovered, enormous dumps of ammunition, sticks of dynamite, bombs and mortars were seized. Communications between the 'Illegals' were severed, secret transmitters destroyed, the foundations of the organisation broken up and the subterranean activities of the National Socialists thereby attacked at the root.

This opened up an unusual field of activity for Herr von Papen.

It was odd that here his earliest activities as saboteur in America linked up with his latest task as politician. Papen was absolutely in his element. He was able, was even forced by the orders of his Government, to hatch conspiracies, to give impetus to acts of sabotage, to spin his intrigues abroad with the object of undermining neighbouring States from Austria as a base. Suddenly a new use was found for the half-forgotten sabotage technique whose meaning he had learnt from his text-books twenty years earlier, and had employed so unskillfully in America.

Herr von Papen knew that he was considered capable of any intrigue. But it pleased him to pretend to be as innocent as a lamb, unable to do anyone any harm.

On the 6th November 1934 he spoke to a gathering of press representatives in Vienna. His comments were brief and of little interest. But he did say that the Anschluss was not a burning question and described his own activities in the following terms: 'Ever since I was compelled to leave

the United States of America as a result of a little matter in which I had only tried to serve my country to the best of my ability, a thin, unfortunate shadow of imaginary intrigues seems to have hung around my name. I cannot even go on a week-end of shooting in Hungary without its being imagined I am concerned in some political affair. But really deer are my only victims.'

Already, however, news of his alleged utterances at the German Club at Graz was leaking out. It was said that he had stated that the Anschluss between Germany and Austria was inevitable, and that the only matter for speculation was the period within which this historic event would be accomplished.

So once again Papen tried turning on his Catholic gramophone record. Austria is a thoroughly Catholic country and Dr. Schuschnigg was a true servant of the Church. Consequently Herr von Papen, a Catholic too, and a papal chamberlain, believed that he could rapidly win the confidence of those whom he intended to betray. But to begin with he experienced some bitter disappointments. The Vatican, which had nothing good to say of Papen, warned its leading representatives in Austria and Hungary against making any contact with him, and it made some stir when the Cardinal Archbishop Innitzer in Vienna and Cardinal Seregi in Budapest both refused to receive him.

Papen thought again: 'Everything comes to him who waits.' And once again he endeavoured to spend as much time as possible away from Austria with the object of lulling the Austrians into a sense of false security, and stimulating the idea that he was indeed a nominal envoy, and had no immediate interest in Austrian developments.

It must unfortunately be confessed that this ruse of his worked. In the first months of his activity in Austria absolutely nothing could be detected which indicated that he was pursuing any political line. It was known that in Germany dissatisfaction was shown over his slowness. But whenever Papen had occasion to report to Berlin on Austrian affairs he appears to have convinced influential quarters

that at the moment his method in Austria was the only one possible.

For Papen's first requirement was time gradually to reconstruct the spent and scattered forces of the 'Illegals'. Little by little he succeeded in convincing the gentlemen in Berlin that for the construction of an effective subterranean organisation at least two or three years were necessary.

### *The 'National Betonten'*

An important side of Herr von Papen's work in Austria consisted in building up 'invisible' organisations. The hatred of the Austrian Government, after the murder of Dollfuss, for everything National Socialist was so insurmountable that Schuschnigg and his circle had strictly refused to allow any organisations which might be considered as National Socialistic. Papen originated the idea of forming cells out of the former 'Greater Germany Organisation' in Austria. This organisation had favoured an Anschluss with Germany, but its members were not adherents of Hitler. Papen wanted to form National Socialist clubs round these nuclei. The former Greater Germans felt extraordinarily flattered when Papen explained to them that, as a Catholic and a nobleman, he was by no means in agreement with Hitler's views, but that he did stand for the idea of a Greater Germany which provided for the most far-reaching collaboration between Germany and Austria outside the confines of the Hitler Party.

On this foundation, Herr von Papen first built up a group which called itself the 'Betont-Nationalen' ('Marked Nationalists') and which, as it was under the leadership of an engineer called Rheinthaller, took the group-name of 'Aktion Rheinthaller'. This group, which always stressed the fact that it was National but Austrian, got into personal touch, through Papen, with the Chancellor Dr. Schuschnigg. That it was composed of absolute traitors to Austria is clearly seen in the fact that Rheinthaller took a share, in March 1938, in the first National Socialist Government in Austria

and was among the men who gave the Schuschnigg Government the *coup-de-grâce*.

The way in which these 'invisible organisations' went to work is shown more clearly by another episode. To this group of 'National Betonten' belonged one Dr. Glaise-Horstenau, the keeper of the Dynastic, Court and State archives, a man who had originally been regarded as a monarchist. Every single member of the group rejected the suggestion that he cultivated any close relationship with the National Socialists. Yet after the invasion of Austria this same Dr. Glaise-Horstenau, who, in July 1936, had become a minister in Schuschnigg's cabinet, publicly and proudly announced that prior to his appointment to the Austrian Government he had secretly travelled to meet Hitler at Berchtesgaden, and had received full instructions regarding his ministerial activities.

This was the teaching of Franz von Papen.

### *The Reconstruction of the 'Illegals'*

In this way, step by step, the new illegal organisations were reconstructed under Papen's guidance. Carinthia and Styria were the beginning. Then followed work along the Danube. These areas were more easily organised because, unnoticed by the Austrian authorities, in the dead of night supplies of money and propaganda, arms and ammunition, bombs and sticks of dynamite could be delivered to the conspirators from the German ships on the wide river.

The leader of these secret organisations was Leopold, a former captain in the Austrian Army, who lived at Krems on the Danube. A subsidiary organisation of the 'Aktion Leopold' worked in Vienna under Captain Leopold's secretary, Leopold Tavs, who later on was to be a deciding factor in Papen's own affairs.

After the foundations of the militant section of the National Socialists in Austria had been reconstructed Herr von Papen set about paving the way for the lifting of the ban against the National Socialist Party in Austria.

*Hitler's Promises of 11th July 1936*

The chief obstacle to a forcible Anschluss between Austria and Germany was not only the resistance of the Austrian Government and the Austrian people to a fusion with National Socialism, but also the interest of Mussolini in the Danubian Republic. The march of Italian troops to the Brenner in July 1934 must have convinced Hitler that any attempt at the annexation of Austria would give rise to an armed conflict with Italy. In the summer of 1936 Italy was faced by the preparations for the Abyssinian War. Mussolini wanted to be sure of his rear and had therefore a burning interest in bringing about an armistice between Austria and Germany. Herr von Papen in Vienna, and Herr von Hassel, the German Ambassador in Rome, were therefore commissioned to draft a treaty with the aim of a rapprochement between Italy and Germany which was to produce something in the nature of a lasting peace between Germany and Austria.

On the advice of his two ambassadors Hitler decided formally to guarantee Austria's independence. He had also decided thus early to break his pledge and this solemn covenant. Treaties always have been but scraps of paper to him.

On the 11th July 1936 this notorious treaty between Germany and Austria came into force. The text ran as follows :

Convinced that they are thereby rendering a valuable contribution towards the peaceful development of Europe, and believing that they are thereby rendering the best service to the various common interests of the two German States, the Government of the German Reich and the Government of the Austrian Federal States have decided to restore normal and friendly mutual relations.

It is therefore declared :

(1) In the sense of the statement made by the Führer and Reichschancellor on 21st May 1935, the German Government recognises the full sovereignty of the Federal State of Austria.



(2) Each of these two Governments shall regard the internal political conditions of the other country, including the question of Austrian National Socialism, as a domestic concern of that country, upon which it will exert neither direct nor indirect influence.

(3) The general policy of the Government of the Austrian Federal States, and its policy toward Germany in particular, shall be constantly guided by the principle that Austria recognises herself to be a German State. The Rome Protocol of 1934, together with the additional clauses of 1936, and the relations of Austria with Italy and Hungary as partners in the said protocol, are not hereby affected.

In amplification of this treaty the Austrian Government issued a communiqué which stated that : ' Austria declares her readiness to grant an amnesty for National Socialists, and to provide for their collaboration within the framework of the Patriotic Front.'

Here was the loophole, made by Papen, which once again was to give National Socialism access to official positions in Austria, and even to the Austrian Government.

As a special mark of Hitler's appreciation of Papen's success which afforded a very important lever for National Socialist propaganda in Austria he was promoted from envoy to ambassador.

It was of no avail that the Austrian Government added the following warning : ' The amnesty announced by the Chancellor for Nazi offenders will not on any account extend to people who have been convicted for common crimes. . . . Attention is drawn to the fact that a new Austrian law for the defence of the State, promulgated on 10th July, makes it clear that illegal propaganda for political parties will be followed by the energetic prosecution of those engaged in it. Propaganda for the Anschluss will not be tolerated.'

Far more important was another paragraph in this same communiqué :

' The Austrian Chancellor will invite persons enjoying his confidence as representatives of Austrian Nationals

to collaborate with him and share in Austrian political responsibility.' \*

One of the foremost men who enjoyed the special confidence of Schuschnigg was Dr. Edmund von Glaise-Horstenaus already referred to as well as others among the 'National Betonten'. This was the object for which the organisation had been constructed by Papen. It was only when Schuschnigg was already in the hands of the Gestapo that he learnt that these men who were in his confidence had visited Hitler for detailed instructions.

Austria by means of this armistice hoped not only to improve relations with the German Reich but also to assure her own independence. The Government also believed that it had won a breathing space in which to complete economic reconstruction, and thereby secure internal politics against the crimes of the National Socialists. Actually, however, this solemn treaty was nothing more than a diplomatic victory for Herr von Papen. The treaty was to be used to fill the Civil Service and other important posts with National Socialists, to lull the Government into a sense of security, and to weaken its resistance to the aspirations of Hitler.

\* More precise details of the betrayal of Austria by Germany, and the downfall of Austria, are to be found in the author's book *Thus Die Austria* (Edward Arnold & Co., London, 1938).



[Kewtown]

PAPEN GREETING GLAISE-HORSTENAU AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR DR.  
SCHUSCHNIGG'S WIFE, JULY 14, 1936.

Glaise-Horstenau, Schuschnigg's intimate friend, had returned from a treacherous meeting with Hitler four days before.

## CHAPTER 16

### *A Plot for Papen's Assassination*

#### *Interim Conspiracies*

The conclusion of the treaty of the 11th July 1936 gave Papen not only the opportunity but also the right to meddle in the home affairs of Austria to a greater extent than before.

In the middle of October of the same year he endeavoured by making use of the services of the Right wing of the Austrian Heimwehr to bring about the downfall of Schuschnigg's Government. The leader of this section of the Heimwehr was Major Emil Fey. He had been decorated with the order of the Knights of Maria Theresa for outstanding bravery in the face of the enemy, and was later Austrian Vice-Chancellor. On the 25th July 1934, at the Chancellery at Vienna, this man had already played a very ambiguous rôle over the murder of Dr. Dollfuss. Although Fey was an officer, and it might have been expected that he would resist the forcible entry of the National Socialists, he had not lifted a finger; and during the whole day which the putschists spent in the Chancellery not a hair of his head had been harmed. It was known that he belonged to the extremists of the Right wing of the Heimwehr, and to a certain degree sympathised with the National Socialists.

Following the Dollfuss murder Fey was dismissed from office on account of his behaviour, and the leadership of the Heimwehr was handed over to the Vice-Chancellor, Prince Starhemberg, with unlimited powers. Fey did all he could to regain his authority. He had a powerful influence particularly over the battalions of the Viennese Heimwehr and the whole Right radical section of the Austrian Defence Force.

In the middle of October it was known in governmental circles in Austria that Papen had had several interviews with Major Fey. The Austrian Government was extremely alarmed. Major Fey summoned his supporters in full war panoply to a great meeting in Vienna on the 16th October 1936. When the day came he found the railway stations and public buildings occupied. The marching battalions were disarmed and taken to their barracks, and after this Papen had no opportunity to conspire with Fey. Major Fey and all his family died on the 16th March 1938. It remains uncertain whether he committed suicide or was murdered by the invading National Socialists.

But in the same way that Papen fostered good relations with Schuschnigg's opponents he strove to be on better terms with Schuschnigg himself and his circle with the object of making his influence similarly felt there. At the outset Schuschnigg was very non-committal in consequence of warnings he had received from Rome, but later Papen's insistence had its result, and a form of mutual understanding almost approaching something in the nature of friendship was reached.

As long as Schuschnigg remained negative, Papen, relying on his former Catholic connections, endeavoured to get into closer touch with other clerical circles in Austria. He formed a close but interested friendship with Dr. Funder, the publisher of the clerical Viennese newspaper *Reichspost*, the organ of the Government, and with the Foreign Minister Dr. Schmidt. The latter had been educated in the Jesuit college of Stella Matutina in Feldkirch. Moreover, during the whole period of his activities in Vienna Papen was on the best of terms with Ludwig, the Minister, and Colonel Adam, the two leading figures in the Austrian newspaper world. Immediately after the entry of the German troops into Austria, Dr. Funder, Ludwig and Colonel Adam were arrested and taken to concentration camps. Dr. Schmidt, who in the last months of the Schuschnigg Government had played a double game under Papen's lead, was rewarded

for his treachery to Austria by a position of some importance in the German industrial world.

The autumn of 1936 brought with it unexpected assistance for Papen's exertions in Austria.

Italy decided on her Abyssinian campaign, and England, in conjunction with the League of Nations, ordained sanctions as punishment for this unprovoked aggression. Thereupon Mussolini sought political and economic support in Germany, and Italy's interest in Central Europe took a back seat for the benefit of her Mediterranean policy.

So Germany's way to Central Europe lay open.

#### *A Centre for Treachery and Treason*

Papen's exertions for the leading influence with the 'Betont-Nationalen' did not achieve the smashing success he had hoped. Glaise-Horstenau had not fulfilled Hitler's expectations and the Fey connection only resulted in compromising Papen. The consequence was that Hitler's Ambassador in Vienna tried new methods.

In June 1937, at a time that is when Italy's consent could be counted on, Papen once more visited Schuschnigg. He stated that the terms of the treaty of the 11th July 1936 had not been fully observed on the part of Austria, although a year had now passed. The admission of the National Socialists into the 'Fatherland Front' had not yet taken place, nor had the supporters of pro-German tendencies in Austria any influence at all in political decisions. This lecture of Papen's was supported by a Note from Berlin demanding a further expansion of the rights of 'Nationals' in Austria. Dr. Schuschnigg referred to Rome. There he was informed that Italy was in favour of compliance with the wishes of Germany in this respect.

There was nothing left for it but to allow the 'Nationals' to form an organisation which in fact was nothing more or less than a centre for treachery and treason. It received the high-sounding name of 'National Political Committee in the Patriotic Front'. The chief of this committee was the Innsbruck solicitor, Dr. Seyss-Inquart, a Catholic and a

former comrade-in-arms of Dr. Schuschnigg. Seyss-Inquar enjoyed Schuschnigg's full confidence. But six months later he cold-bloodedly betrayed him and in league with Papen delivered up Austria to Hitler.

The idea of the National Political Committee was this : into the confines of the rigorously Austrian organisation of the ' Fatherland Front ' some National representatives were to be introduced for collaboration. From the beginning the nature of this collaboration was that Seyss-Inquart and his accomplices worked their hardest to extend the rights of the National Socialists in Austria, to permeate the Civil Service, and to found treasonable nuclei in as many places as possible.

Papen of course had his finger well in the pie. He helped in organising, intervened in the name of the German Reich wherever the National Political Committee could not carry out its plans alone, and saw to it that arms and cash poured in from Germany.

In July 1937 Schuschnigg travelled to Italy once more, his object being to discuss personally with Mussolini the dangers of these developments in Austria, and to appeal for his intervention.

But Mussolini would not receive Schuschnigg. After two days the Austrian Chancellor had to return empty-handed to Vienna, where in the meantime Papen had stirred up fresh unrest. German delegates who had come to Vienna to clarify the treaty of the previous July were aggrieved by attacks in the Austrian Press, and Papen was threatening that the deputation would immediately return. Schuschnigg had to intervene : the result was that the sale of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, which had hitherto been banned, was now allowed.

Herr von Papen now felt firmer ground under his feet. He took cover behind his friend Dr. Schmidt, the Foreign Minister. Twice in the course of three months the Austrian Foreign Minister had dealings with the German Government on Papen's advice. Once he met von Neurath, the German Foreign Minister, on the Arlberg in July,

and shortly afterwards visited Goering at Schorfheide (Goering's estate).

Schuschnigg was kept exceedingly busy in warding off the attacks which Papen and the Austrian National Socialists were making almost daily on the independence of Austria. It was Papen's idea, in the autumn of 1937, to invite Goering for a visit to Austria. Papen hoped that Goering, who in 1933 had thrust him so brutally to the wall, would find similar brutal methods for Austria, even if he were only the guest for a few days of the Danubian Republic. Schuschnigg had difficulty in parrying this treacherous thrust without provoking diplomatic entanglements. A visit of von Neurath's to Vienna had already given rise to some highly unpleasant demonstrations: it would have been impossible to stop Goering from treating similar demonstrations in a very different way.

#### *Papen advances to the Attack*

Meanwhile Papen believed the time was ripe for him to advance for a general attack on the Schuschnigg Government. He plied Berlin with reports setting out the offences of the Austrian Minister against the treaty of July 1936. He even spied on the private visits made by members of the Austrian Government, in order to supply Berlin with motives for interference. One of his most extravagant acts in the autumn of 1937 was to make representations to Berlin because some of the Austrian Ministers were present in an unofficial capacity at a lecture given by the French politician Paul Reynaud (who became the French Minister of Finance at the end of 1939). Reynaud had spoken of Germany's responsibility for the outbreak of the World War, and Papen had complained to Hitler that the Austrian Ministers had made no protest. It must be borne in mind that Hitler himself had declared that he would respect the independence of Austria, and therefore the Austrian Ministers, as sovereign officials, were surely to be allowed the right of freedom of thought.

In another and very similar case Papen even presumed so



far as to protest to Berlin because the Burgomaster of Vienna and the Austrian Minister of Education had attended a lecture by a priest who in his description of the relations between the Vatican and Germany had spoken disapprovingly of the German interpretation of the Concordat.

Papen would never have dared to proceed so definitely if in the meantime a decision, vast in its scope, had not been made in Berlin. On the 25th September 1937 Mussolini had spent several days on a state visit to Berlin. In an interview with Goering he had given his approval to Germany's having a free hand in Central Europe. When Goering had expressly stated that this implied Austria and Czechoslovakia, Mussolini had, by his silence, given his consent.

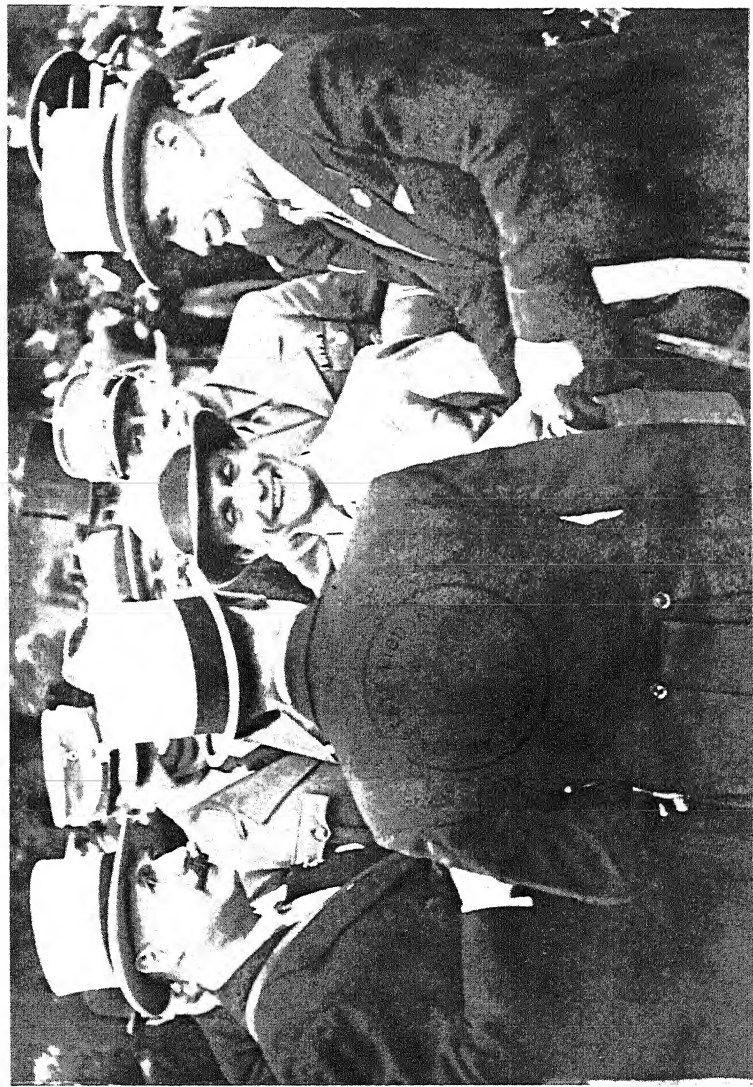
The first general attack by the German Government on Austria followed at the beginning of November 1937.

On 10th November 1937, the Vienna Government was handed, through Herr von Papen, a Note from the Reich Government protesting in the strongest terms against the manner in which Austria was alleged to have carried out the Agreement of 11th July, and adopting a stern attitude towards Austria's monarchist aspirations.

The Note contained a warning that certain things which had happened in Austria were calculated greatly to embitter the National opposition to Dr. Schuschnigg, and therefore were not likely to promote the process of internal pacification in Austria which was also desired by the Reich.

The Agreement of 11th July 1936, the Note pointed out, which was the guarantee of peace between Germany and Austria, and of peace within Austria, rested on two principles. The first, relating to the independence of Austria, had been carefully upheld by the Austrian Government. In the upholding of the second of Austria's undertakings, to conduct her efforts as a 'German State,' the Austrian Government had been less thorough.

She had seemed, it was suggested, to tolerate elements which carried the idea of independence as far as opposition



PAPIN MAKES A JOKE.

At the Berlin races on September 19, 1937. In the centre is Dr. Goebbels, and on the left M. Fiam, on the right M. Pommet, the French Ambassador.

to the Reich. Things had gone so far, it was stated, 'that important persons had suggested as the ideal objective the conversion of Austria into a second Switzerland, while the legitimist campaign had been aspiring to create an "Austrian Nation"'. These elements, which propagated their ideas overtly, had not hitherto been interfered with by the authorities. Indeed signs of a benevolent tolerance were not lacking.'

The Note went on to say that those movements might lead to a destruction of the Agreement of 11th July and to the disturbance of the 'friendly' relations between the two German States. Reference was then made to the embitterment of the National opposition and its possible effects on the internal peace of Austria.

'Time and again attempts had been made from abroad to separate Austria from the Reich, and to draw her into a foreign combination, on the pretence that she was being threatened by the Reich. Not only was there evidence that the process of pacification had not yet been successful, but there was also plenty of evidence that dissatisfaction existed. From the point of view of the Reich it seemed that it should not be too difficult to create a normal state of affairs in the interests of Austria, of the Reich and of the whole German nation. But the condition of success must be that the two principles of Austrian policy as set out in the July Agreement were to be observed in a more impartial manner than hitherto.'

From beginning to end this Note was an expression of Papen's nefariousness, and represented the first definite interference with Austrian sovereignty. For the independence of Austria, as guaranteed by Hitler, would not only not have been endangered by the eventual conversion of the Danubian Republic into a monarchy but would have been much better assured. But at that time Hitler believed on the basis of Papen's secret reports that the moment had already come for him to adopt a sharper tone towards Austria and even actively to interfere.

It was, of course, part of the general scheme of attack that

National Socialist forces in Austria were correspondingly mobilised.

*The Construction of Terrorist Organisations*

Brief reference has already been made to the fact that besides the construction of the political organisations great emphasis was laid on the construction of the terrorist organisations of the National Socialist 'Illegals'. Such organisations had existed in Austria, and in great numbers, before the 25th July 1934. At that time there had been almost daily attempts at bomb outrages with the object of blowing up bridges and railway tracks. And bombs were placed in shops, post offices, pillar-boxes and telephone kiosks just as they were in England five years later by the I.R.A. In 1934 this terrorist organisation was completely disbanded and destroyed, but during the next three years Papen had systematically helped in its reconstruction.

Captain Leopold and Dr. Leopold Tavs, the leaders of these terrorist organisations, belonged to the most fanatical section of the National Socialists. They were sworn adherents of Adolf Hitler, Hermann Goering, Rudolf Hess, and probably of Dr. Goebbels too, but they maintained a defensive attitude to a certain extent towards Herr von Papen: they knew that he had once been ranged against the régime. It is true that they willingly and at any time allowed money payments and deliveries of arms and other assistance to be made to them, but below the surface this intriguing Junker was a thorn in their flesh, and they would have infinitely preferred as ambassador in Vienna some ruffian who had risen from the ranks of the S.A. The dislike of the terrorists for Papen, whom they had to thank for all the assistance they received, was at one time carried so far that they demanded his recall because he worked too cautiously and slowly for them.

By the end of 1937 the terrorist organisations of the 'Illegals' had been so far reconstructed that they could begin their activities again at the point where they had been brought to a standstill in 1934. The subterranean con-

struction proceeded apace, for the Reich Government annually sent millions and millions of marks to Austria to hire men, provide arms and equipment, pay traitors and instigate acts of sabotage. An official at the Chancellery was arrested because he had betrayed to Papen the key of the Austrian Government's code, and dismissals had to be made in other sections of the Civil Service because it was found that measures to be taken by the police were known in Berlin even before being carried into effect in Austria.

Terrorist organisations existed not only in Carinthia and Styria but also in all the other Austrian provinces. If there was no organisation in Vienna, at least there were the nuclei. Thus in the winter of 1937-8, conditions were already ripe for a fresh outburst of violence in Austria. And only the signal from Berlin was needed to set things going, as had happened before in July 1934, though then without result.

The opportunity for general action was to be found in the complaint regarding the oppression of Nationals in Austria. By acts of violence the 'Illegals' were to prove to the whole world that revolt against the 'oppression' they suffered was breaking out in 'deeds of desperation'. These protests of an oppressed underground movement which, of course, was not really oppressed at all were to be carefully prepared and organised from Berlin. Outbursts of desperation are, it is true, usually a spontaneous manifestation. But both Herr von Papen and the Berlin 'seismic-centre' always considered it advisable to cause these 'explosions' to proceed according to written instructions and an accurate time-table.

As had happened so often before in the life-story of Herr von Papen, on this occasion also arrests and the premature disclosure of the project made the whole affair somewhat ridiculous. Only this time the plan was betrayed by Papen himself and not against his will. This was how it happened.

### *The R. H. Plan . . .*

The Führer's Deputy in Berlin is Rudolf Hess. He had been promoted from Hitler's old bodyguard, was one of the

greatest ruffians and 'Saalkämpfer' and had a special talent for violence and acts of terrorism. At the end of 1937 this same R. H., in league with Papen, had drafted out the plan according to which this 'outburst of desperation' on the part of the 'oppressed' Austrian National Socialists was to take place in March and April 1938. The terrorist groups of Leopold, Tavs, Globocnik and Rheintaller were to begin at a sign from Berlin with bomb outrages, shootings, deeds of violence, murders and local putschs. Shootings and general unrest were to continue for weeks and the Austrian Government was not to be given a day's breathing space. The whole of Austria was to break out into an uproar, and armed resistance was to be attacked and worn down.

If the Austrian executive should fire on these 'desperate' men—as it was assumed they would—the Reich Government would intervene for the protection of the persecuted Nationals. For this reason, R. H. added to this plan a detailed marching schedule for the German S.A. and S.S. as well as for a considerable part of the German Army. The eighth German Army Corps (Württemberg) was to be drawn up at full strength on the Austrian frontier ready to march in. The Bavarian and Saxon Army Corps were to be in readiness to support. The trump card was to be a not inconsiderable contingent from the Air Force: five hundred bombers and fighters placed ready on the Bavarian frontier for a thrust against Austria. Terrorists in Austria and troops in Germany were to work hand in glove to ensure the complete success of the putsch this time.

The whole plan was seized by the Austrian State Police in Tavs' Vienna office, in the Teinfalt Strasse. It bore the autograph R. H.

But the man who had called the attention of the Austrian police to this plan and thus effected its discovery was Papen himself.

*—and the Tavs Conspiracy*

For the Austrian terrorists, led by Dr. Leopold Tavs, had taken this original R. H. plan as an opportunity

for adding something of their own which Rudolf Hess could not have suggested. This was the murder of Herr von Papen.

Dr. Tavs had said to himself that the occasion could usefully be improved by a general clean-up. If acts of violence and terrorism were afoot it would be possible to take measures at the outset which would save much bloodshed in the provinces, but which would simply force the German Government immediately to interfere in Austria.

Hess's 'key' plan was indeed received with enthusiasm by the Austrian 'Illegals', in particular his assurances regarding the disposition of the Reichswehr on the Austrian frontier. But the plan underwent a modification in the sense that the Nationalist 'outburst of desperation' was to be released against the sacrosanct German Embassy in Vienna and against the hallowed person of Germany's representative, Herr von Papen.

The Tavs conspiracy was to proceed in this way: in the middle of March a band of illegal National Socialists, dressed in the uniform of the Storm-troopers of the 'Fatherland Front', were to make a surprise attack on the German Embassy. It would thus appear outwardly that the Austrian auxiliary forces had attempted violent measures against National Socialist institutions. As soon as they had forced their way in, the disguised National Socialist terrorists were to murder Papen (in this way they would dispose of their *bête noire*). The Embassy itself was to be set on fire and destroyed.

Their idea was the counterpart of the Nazi putsch of July 1934, when one hundred and forty-four National Socialists, disguised as Austrian soldiers and policemen, had forced their way into the Chancellery to murder Dr. Dollfuss.

Dr. Tavs was counting on the assassination of the German Ambassador to produce a howl of horror and exasperation from all the Nationalists in Austria—and in Germany for that matter. If this were followed by a general rising in

revenge of the National Socialist terrorists in Austria, then the German Reich had an immediate excuse, unaccompanied by long preliminary bloodshed, to intervene and to occupy Austria.

But this plan was not at all to Papen's liking. Much as he had exerted himself in the past three and a half years to force Austria within the confines of the German Reich, he had no desire to achieve this aim by the sacrifice of his own life. For, as we have mentioned on several previous occasions, Herr von Papen is no hero but only an adventurer and intriguer.

And for this simple reason, on 26th January 1938, Papen sent his attaché, Baron von Ketteler, to the Viennese State Police. He was to give the authorities politely to understand that there had come to the ambassador's ears rumours of a certain putsch plot by irresponsible elements against the German Legation. He must leave it to the police themselves to ascertain the truth of these rumours.

It was naturally the duty of the Austrian police, working on this warning, immediately to set their whole machinery in motion, and so no later than the next day Dr. Tavs and his entire gang were arrested in possession of the Rudolf Hess Plan which had been deposited with Dr. Tavs. The police report went straight to Dr. Schuschnigg who, as is understandable, was not a little indignant when he held in his hands a plan by Hess, 'Hitler's Deputy', for the destruction of Austria. Schuschnigg had the plan photographed at once and sent a copy to Mussolini. He intended to have Dr. Tavs tried in public and to produce the R. H. plan in evidence.

### *The End of Baron von Ketteler*

Here the course of historical developments must again be anticipated in order to round off an episode which has direct connection with it. Baron Emmanuel von Ketteler, the secretary and personal friend of Papen, had by his intervention, without a doubt, indirectly saved the life of the ambassador. Herr von Ketteler was re-



warded for this friendly service with the loss of his life, as many others before him who had had relations with Papen had been.

In the second week in March when Austria had been betrayed the Gestapo invaded Vienna. The first day after their entry Baron von Ketteler vanished from the premises of the German Embassy without leaving a trace. A National Socialist official of the police headquarters in Vienna had informed the Gestapo that it was Baron von Ketteler who at the end of January had put the Viennese police on the scent of the R. H. documents.

Herr von Ketteler remained 'missing' for two whole months. On 16th May the body of a young man was washed up in the neighbourhood of Hainburg on the Danube near the former Austro-Hungarian frontier. After a few hours the corpse was identified as that of Baron von Ketteler. The official post-mortem investigation on the body showed that Baron von Ketteler must have been heavily chloroformed. In such a state of unconsciousness he could not have committed suicide, and the obvious conclusion was that he had been settled by the Gestapo.

Baron von Ketteler's body was taken to his home and buried on 31st May 1938, at Stormede, near Lippstadt in Westphalia. The announcement of his death published by the family was deeply affecting. It ran: 'It has pleased the Lord over life and death in his inscrutable wisdom to take to Himself into eternity our dearly beloved son, brother, and brother-in-law, Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler, in his time Honorary Attaché of the German Legation at Vienna, Honorary Knight of the Sovereign Order of Knights of Malta, at the untimely age of thirty-one. Before God's will we bow down in deep sorrow. We commend his beloved soul to the prayers of the faithful and to the sacrifice of the priest at the altar.'

As usual, Franz von Papen had a wreath laid on the coffin of his friend and secretary.

*Papen is recalled*

The discovery of the plot caused great anger in both camps. Dr. Schuschnigg was furious that the German Government, who had officially guaranteed by solemn agreement the independence of Austria, should hatch plots in their own fold for the destruction of Austria. On the other hand, Hitler was raving because Herr von Papen, who was to deliver the Austrian fortresses into the hands of the Third Reich, had himself betrayed the plot to the Austrians.

Berlin regarded Papen's immediate recall as certain. But there was a week's delay before it came. For, in the period between 24th January, and 4th February, 1938, the German Government was once more involved in a crisis of the first order, and was faced with a complete remodelling. Just then the National Socialist Party was mustering its forces for a conclusive blow against the hitherto unconquered Reichswehr and the diplomats. General von Blomberg and Freiherr von Neurath who, as moderate Junkers, had resisted the violent foreign policy of the Hitler régime were forced to resign. The same fate befell the German Commander-in-Chief, General von Fritsch, who has died since then under sinister circumstances at the Polish Front.

On 4th February, 1938, the new German Government, National Socialist *in toto*, was formed. Herr von Ribbentrop became Foreign Minister in Neurath's place, Hitler himself took over the command of the forces in place of General von Fritsch. The Commander of Army-District No. 1 (Königsberg), General von Brauchitsch, replaced General von Blomberg. Now the National Socialist Party could be indifferent to influence from any quarter, conservative or otherwise, and Hitler could set about conquest by violence, supported by the army and the diplomatists.

Two relics of the earlier diplomatic period were relieved of their posts. They were Herr von Papen in Vienna and Herr von Hassel in Rome.

Herr von Papen, momentarily in Hitler's bad books, left Vienna as early as 6th February. While he was on his way

to Germany a telegram from Hitler reached him at Linz, calling him to Berchtesgaden to report immediately in person. Papen broke his journey at once and travelled to Berchtesgaden.

His official activities as ambassador in Vienna there terminated. But the old intriguer again promptly found a way to Hitler's favour. He proposed a new method for the transfer of Austria to Germany, the transfer that he had so nearly prevented.

But before this new plan is described, and with it the end of Austria, we must quote as an aid to the complete understanding of his official duties as ambassador a farewell speech which he made on 16th February 1938, before the Austro-German joint committee. This speech was short but meaty. Here it is :

If, in a few days, I am to leave this post on the orders of the Führer and Chancellor, yet I believe I can do this and face my superior and the German nation with a clear conscience. It has been my endeavour in this period to clear the ground by peaceful means for ideas of German unity, and so to prevent the tragedy of German history being augmented by a further catastrophe. The 11th July 1936 was a beginning, and you will recollect that in this same place a year ago I ventured the opinion that a new spring would follow the storm over Austria. And it will come too for Germany as surely as the world turns on its axis.

This speech at first appears somewhat obscure when one considers that it constituted the farewell of an unsuccessful ambassador. It could only be properly understood by a few of the initiated who were aware of the new mission which Hitler had given Papen. For this speech, delivered a month before the entry of the German troops into Austria, proved that Papen already had knowledge of the programme and could therefore regard his mission as successfully closed.

The contrast of this speech with Papen's own solemn declaration to President Miklas, on the 6th August 1934, is glaring : the latter utterance had provided for the respect of

Austrian independence by Papen himself and the German Government. One can, unfortunately, only record bad faith and intrigue when they have succeeded. A solemn State declaration and a promise can seldom have been more grossly broken.

## CHAPTER 17

### *Papen betrays Schuschnigg*

*'Hitler's Special Commissioner for the Surrender of Austria'*

Papen's reception at Berchtesgaden, on 6th February 1938, was anything but friendly. Although Hitler at that time did not know that Baron von Ketteler had played informer to the Vienna police, he rated Papen right and left because his great putsch plan had been betrayed and Austria still retained her independence. On 4th February, at the Government reshuffling in Berlin, disgust at Papen's misfire in Vienna was expressed in unequivocal terms. Three candidates for his post in Austria had already been named; naturally they were all sworn National Socialists, but Joseph Bürckel had pride of place. He had been Commissioner for the ballot in the Saar, and was a dangerous Party man, rough, uncultured, ruthless and brutal. Second came Lieutenant Colonel Kriebel, who was then consul-general in Shanghai. This man appeared particularly suited to represent National Socialism in Austria because he owned Schloss Hirschenau in Carinthia and was thus an Austrian landowner; he was also an intimate friend of Hitler. The third nominee was Krebs, one of Hitler's closest collaborators. All three men were eminently suitable for executing the terrorist plan drafted by Hess.

It is most unusual for an ambassador who has been recalled by his Government to return immediately on a special mission to the country where he had previously acted as representative. But this was so in Papen's case. While allowing the well nigh inexhaustible torrent of Hitler's wrath to pour over him he yet managed by a word here and there to put forward a new plan for the delivering

up of Austria, and this plan won Hitler's instant approval. For Papen appealed to the confidence which he enjoyed with Dr. Schuschnigg, and explained that he believed he could persuade Schuschnigg to a personal interview with Hitler at Berchtesgaden.

Hitler immediately favoured this idea of Papen's, for all along he had wished to see Schuschnigg personally. He had the intention of forcing Schuschnigg into far-reaching commitments, and of intimidating him to such an extent that the Austrian Chancellor would cease to resist. Acting on this desire of Hitler's, Mussolini in the autumn of 1937 had repeatedly used his influence with Schuschnigg to persuade him to visit Hitler. And at a conference in Budapest for the extension of the Italo-Austro-Hungarian Rome Protocol, Count Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister, had put constant pressure on Schuschnigg to make him tread the path of humiliation to Hitler.

Dr. Schuschnigg had repeatedly defended himself with all his energies against a meeting with Hitler, for he had absolutely no desire for a personal interview with the Chancellor of the German Reich, whom he detested with all his heart. His political instincts warned him that at such a meeting Hitler would try extortion. Until now he had successfully avoided the encounter. Consequently Papen's offer to get Schuschnigg to Berchtesgaden electrified Hitler, and on his own responsibility he sent Papen, his discredited ambassador, back to Vienna and, moreover, 'for the execution of a special mission on the orders of the Reichschancellor and Führer'.

Political circles internationally and in Austria too were not a little surprised when Herr von Papen, who had only departed from Vienna on 6th February, returned on the evening of the following day. Papen instantly communicated with Dr. Funder, the publisher of the *Reichspost*, with Dr. Schmidt, the Foreign Minister, and finally with Dr. Schuschnigg himself.

The plot which Papen had evolved was as simple as it was infamous. He gave Dr. Schuschnigg to understand

that in the interest of Austria it was urgently necessary that the Chancellor of the Bund, armed with the incriminating Tavs and Hess documents, should in person lay a complaint before Hitler and produce the original documents, the object being to protect Austria against similar plots in the future.

Dr. Schuschnigg was aware that the revelation of the putsch plan had some personal connection with Herr von Papen. He knew further that the plot had been hatched against Papen himself as well as against the Austrian State. Consequently he gave more credence to Papen's suggestion when the latter declared that he and Dr. Schmidt, the Austrian Foreign Minister, would like to be present at the encounter in order to support Schuschnigg's demands.

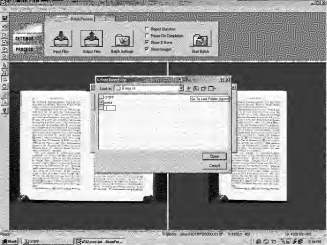
It was a blatant case of treachery. For Papen already knew precisely what Hitler wanted of Schuschnigg; he knew that the R. H. plan had not been drafted without Hitler's knowledge, and again he knew that Hitler and Hess meant to abide by the plan.

In spite of his inward reluctance, Schuschnigg had two reasons for accepting Hitler's invitation to Berchtesgaden which was now officially handed to him by Papen. First Papen had assured him in a personal interview that he had nothing whatever to fear from a meeting with Hitler, as Austria's independence would in any circumstances remain guaranteed and Hitler would make no further demands. And by this meeting Schuschnigg also hoped he might prevent the dispatch to Vienna, as German Envoy in place of Papen, of such dangerous terrorists as Bürckel, Kriebel or Krebs.

Therefore, deceived by Papen, deceived by Schmidt, his own Foreign Minister, Schuschnigg walked into the Berchtesgaden trap.

When in his own car he had crossed the frontier at Salzburg, and was driving to Berchtesgaden, he realised that he had been decoyed there. For the whole triangle of Bavaria, hemmed in by Salzburg and the Tirol, simply bristled with troops and arms. Schuschnigg's trained

## Hitler's Lackey



recognised at the first glance that Herr Hitler possessed information regarding the Hess document. This information was relevant to the march of the German Army and the S.S., which had been mentioned for all practical purposes already fulfilled. And in a moment he realised that the danger of the situation for himself and Austria exceeded his worst fears.

But Schuschnigg, unlike Papen, is no coward. Neither on 12th February, when for eleven hours he stood in the raking fire of an extortionate Hitler, nor on that far more fateful 11th March, when he had to resign, did he flee. He could have saved his skin with far greater ease than Herr von Papen had been able to, but he stayed at his post on both occasions, facing prison and torture rather than take to his heels.

Papen's promise to Schuschnigg proved to be a farrago of lies. From the start Papen had blandly betrayed Schuschnigg and Austria simply to improve his own standing with Hitler.

Hitler refused to listen to Schuschnigg, and showed himself better informed over the Hess plan than Schuschnigg liked. He started off with a list of sixteen demands, which practically amounted to a surrender of Austria to the Reich. (The first meeting between Herr Hitler and Dr. Schuschnigg was made the subject of a cruel joke in Vienna. The official form of 'Austrian salute' as it then existed was to raise the right hand with three fingers lifted accompanied by the greeting word 'Austria'. Political satire quickly seized its opportunity. Dr. Schuschnigg, so the joke had it, arrived at Obersalzberg and asked Herr Hitler: 'What do you want?' Whereupon Herr Hitler raised his right hand with three fingers raised and replied, 'Austria.')

The details of the Berchtesgaden encounter and its consequences for Austria have been exhaustively described elsewhere (for example, in the author's book *Thus Died Austria*). There is not space here fully to relate how Schuschnigg was able, by his diplomatic skill, effectively to counter the assaults of Hitler and his advisers, and





APR 1938

PAPEN, WITH HIS ATTACHE'S, BARON VON KETTELEI (*left*) AND COUNT KAGINIGG, LEAVING VIENNA STATION ON FEBRUARY 21, 1938, FOR HIS INTERVIEW WITH HITLER IN BERLIN.

One month later Baron von Kettelei was murdered by the Gestapo.

how by the treachery and base methods of the National Socialists he was overthrown in his own country a month later.

For in all these events Papen had no part, although the organisation upon which the whole plan and the basis of concerted action rested was the creation of his brain.

### *Schuschnigg's Fate*

Dr. Kurt von Schuschnigg, the last Austrian Chancellor, was yet another who had to pay more than dearly for the trust he reposed in Herr von Papen. On the evening of 11th March 1938, the day that he resigned and the German Army marched over the frontier, he was arrested by his sometime friend Dr. Seyss-Inquart. The next day Heinrich Himmler, Chief of the German Gestapo, arrived by air at the Aspern aerodrome; he had with him, picked from the ranks of his officials in Berlin, 'a pack of bloodhounds'. Schuschnigg was immediately taken into custody by the Gestapo. For days he was kept shut up in his former residence Schloss Belvedere, and then shifted to the Hotel Metropole, the headquarters of the Gestapo in Vienna. There he was allotted a cell which was hard by the 'torture chambers' as they were called. In those cells his former supporters were beaten, tortured and maimed. The shrieks of pain and desperation uttered by these, his friends, must have broken the spirit of this paragon among men, and driven him frantic.

Hitler at first cherished the plan of having Dr. Schuschnigg tried and found guilty of 'high treason' in a public trial. Dr. Schuschnigg's high treason consisted of his fighting with all his might against the aspirations of the National Socialists for the conquest of Austria, his country. But Mussolini entered a protest against the trial of an Austrian Chancellor who, after all, had been his friend and ally.

And so Dr. Schuschnigg still languishes in the torture chambers of the Gestapo in Vienna. For two whole years he has been kept prisoner there, and no attempt at a trial

has ever been made nor has anyone been able to establish the least evidence of guilt against him.

English consular officials who have but lately returned from Central Europe report that Dr. Schuschnigg is now a changed and broken old man, as white as a ghost. He is secretly led out at night by the Gestapo to take a few breaths of fresh air. And he is only forty-two. While still in prison he was allowed to marry Countess Vera Fugger, who had adopted his young son. This was the only favour he was granted. As long as Schuschnigg was in power in Austria, he had to listen to many objections to his uncompromising and non-native ways. He was another Brüning who placed the good of his country and his people far above his own interest. And this man too was overthrown by Papen who represented an entirely opposite philosophy of life.

### *Thousands Dead, Tens of Thousands Arrested*

Schuschnigg was the most notable of Papen's victims in Austria. The friends whom he had collected in Vienna—Dr. Funder, Colonel Adam, the Ministers Ludwig and Pertner, Schmitz, the Burgomaster, and numerous others—were sent to concentration camps in Germany and there tortured. They had all believed that Papen was among the few respectable supporters of the National Socialist régime. They had assumed that he was a pious Catholic who would respect the Catholic element in Austria. It was certainly never believed that he would deliver the Austrian Catholics into Hitler's hands as he did.

This papal chamberlain was richly rewarded for his deed. By Hitler's special decree he was received into the National Socialist Party and given a gold badge of honour.

Once again thousands of dead and a still greater number of prisoners had to foot the bill for one of Herr von Papen's adventures. In the front rank of those who had to pay were the Jews, but there were also the priests and pious Christians, the monarchists, the aristocracy and the patriots. In March and April 1938 there were daily cases of whole

families committing suicide because they had been so persecuted, ruined and tortured. In the period of the bitterest pogroms in Vienna, from 23rd to 25th April, a daily toll of more than a hundred suicides was counted. The total number of suicides in Vienna for March and April must have reached about two thousand. Politicians, writers, artists, doctors, winners of the Nobel Prize, the cultured élite of Vienna preferred to seek death voluntarily rather than live in the Nazi Paradise.

The number of those arrested ran into tens of thousands. It is reckoned that in Austria, between 11th March and 20th April, from thirty thousand to forty thousand people were arrested by the Gestapo, and for the most part taken to concentration camps. On 10th November 1938, a fresh batch of five thousand Jews was arrested, but in the interim arrests had never ceased.

### *Papen's 'Success'*

There is no doubt that Papen's activities in Austria, in contrast to his previous efforts, were a success. He had fulfilled the task that had been set him. As he did not wish success to hinge upon his death he had sought it by other means, by lies and intrigue, and this time it was granted him.

This 'success' of Papen's has, it is true, destroyed a flourishing and always light-hearted people with a culture of its own, and condemned it to a joyless and embittered existence. Vanished is the charm and gaiety of Vienna and its inhabitants, destroyed that life of music and culture and cosmopolitanism. Austria, or as it is now termed the Ostmark, has been reduced to an outer province of the Reich, and Vienna systematically degraded to a third-class provincial city.

The 'Spring' which Papen in his parting speech had prophesied for Austria has set in as a hard and permanent winter of distress and deprivation. The flower of Austria is destroyed, trampled to pieces beneath the marching feet of the legions of S.A. and S.S. and the German battalions

which made use of Austria as a parade-ground to further conquests in Czechoslovakia and Poland.

Since the outbreak of the war it is known in Austria and in the whole world that the conquest of Austria by Hitler will merely be an episode in her development, which has already been so rich in vicissitudes. But this episode, for which one must thank Herr von Papen, has already, after barely two years, cost so much in terms of wealth, culture, happiness, friendliness and charm, that it will be decades before the damage caused by the successful efforts of a solitary liar and intriguer can even approximately be made good.

## CHAPTER 18

### *Treaty with the Soviet Union*

#### *Hitler beams on Papen*

Herr von Papen left Austria before the entry of the German troops. He did not consider it necessary to view the last convulsions of his victim. He retired once more to his Wallersfangen estate to recuperate. There he studied with some satisfaction the great news of the conquest of Austria, the imprisonment of his friends and the destruction of a cheerful people. The name of Herr von Papen was not mentioned at any of the great parades, speeches or receptions in Austria. Even his admission into the National Socialist Party was hardly mentioned in the press.

Yet he sunned himself in Hitler's favour. Voices abroad declared loudly that he had fallen into disgrace. This unfortunately was not the case. Herr Hitler now knew that in acts which called for a special brand of intrigue he could rely on his former Vice-Chancellor. For the first time since Hitler's seizure of power in Germany, Papen enjoyed a freedom which was unusual for him and every other German citizen. From Wallersfangen he could travel to France, Luxemburg and Belgium ; for a time it was even said that he intended to undertake a propaganda lecture tour of England. But the Falmouth shock even after more than twenty years was too fresh in his memory for him to risk undergoing another examination of his luggage.

All kinds of rumours were in circulation at this time : Herr von Papen had been secretly liquidated by Hitler ; he was a prisoner on his estate ; he was in a concentration camp. It was true that a nephew of Papen's, bearing the same name, had been arrested and taken to a concentration

camp from which Papen did not succeed in freeing him, but he himself enjoyed absolute freedom of movement on Hitler's authority.

For eight months together nothing concrete was heard of Papen. Then suddenly he appeared in Sweden, where before an audience of about one thousand five hundred he delivered a lecture on the pacification of Central Europe. In this lecture he said that the occupation of Austria and the Sudetenland had been an act of liberation in the cause of peace. All the discontents and differences in one of the greatest danger points of the world had been cleared away by these moves of Hitler's. Hitler, like Alexander, had cut the Gordian knot, and thereby ushered in an era of lasting peace for Central Europe and so for the whole world. The year 1938 had produced, continued Papen, particularly valuable contributions in support of the idea that political problems could be solved not by violence but in a peaceful way. This year had been of particular importance in World History and could well serve as an example for years to come.

Klausener and Jung were, unfortunately, shot in 1934. It is not known who drafted Papen's Stockholm speech. But in any case it would have been quite different and more sapient had it come from the pen of his murdered friends.

The echo of this speech was neither sufficiently powerful nor sufficiently gratifying for the Reichschancellor to send his former Vice-Chancellor on a further tour. This sort of activity was, on the contrary, denied him, and he was once more recalled to Germany. For a further three months he returned to Wallersfangen.

#### *Ambassador at Ankara*

At the beginning of April 1939 it transpired that Hitler had new commissions for Papen. Originally the news was that Papen, like Dr. Schacht, was to make a world tour dispensing propaganda. Later the news became more specific. Papen was to go to the Far East, probably China, to work for Germany's oriental policy from that base. Rumours that he was thus to prepare a rapprochement with

Russia were not believed at that date, although in the preceding months Hitler had held up his attacks on Stalin and the Soviet Union, and the German Press had received strict instructions from Dr. Goebbels to refrain from any hostile comment on Russia.

Then, on 18th April 1939, suddenly came an official announcement that Herr von Papen had been received by Hitler who had wanted a personal chat with him before he took over the position assigned to him, that of ambassador at Ankara, the official representative of Germany in Turkey.

As early as March 1938, shortly after Papen's departure from Vienna, the German Government was soliciting Turkey's consent to the appointment of Papen to Ankara. At that time Kemal Pasha was still President of the Turkish Republic. This man had seen what Papen had done in the past at Vienna, and—according to the Turkish newspapers—strictly refused the desired permission for Papen. Therefore the report, which had filtered into the world press by this time, that Papen was destined for the post of ambassador at Ankara was energetically denied in German quarters.

After Kemal Pasha's death early in 1939, Germany again solicited the consent to Papen. At that time the Anglo-Turkish negotiations had already begun, and the new President of Turkey, Ismet İnönü, first waited to see the progress of these negotiations. When at the end of March 1939 the conclusion of a pact with England was already assured, the Turkish Government made public their agreement to Papen, as İnönü was of the opinion that not even Papen could then make mischief in Turkey.

In explanation of the following events it must here be mentioned that at this date the German High Command had agreed in principle on a war of conquest in Poland. Czechoslovakia was occupied by the German troops in the middle of March, and at the beginning of April a conflict with Poland was considered imminent.

It was General von Brauchitsch, Commander in Chief of the German Army, who since February 1938 (the date of his appointment to this post) and still more forcibly since



March 1939 insisted that Hitler should revise his attitude towards Russia and should strive for a pact of friendship with the Soviet. General von Brauchitsch clearly recognised that after the unprovoked attack on Czechoslovakia a conflict with the Western Powers was in the long run unavoidable. He wished to prevent Germany in the imminent world war once more having to conduct a campaign on two fronts. This could not have been avoided if such an English, French and Russian rapprochement had been brought about as was under consideration in London and Paris at that time.

Since Hitler, after twenty years of most violent attack on the Soviets, could not very well enter into direct negotiations with Stalin without more ado, he intended that Herr von Papen, that tried intriguer, should be of service to him in the neutral post of ambassador to Turkey. The idea was to clear the obvious obstacles to the Russo-German rapprochement out of the way. Simultaneously, Graf von der Schulenburg, the German Ambassador in Moscow, was to test feeling in the same direction. The negotiations over the Russo-German trade agreement were also to provide a preliminary step to political approach.

At that interview with Hitler which he had on 18th April 1939, Papen received precise instructions as to how far he was to go in his dealings with Russia. It is most unusual for the President and Chancellor of the Reich to give a newly appointed ambassador or envoy an audience lasting several hours. The obvious conclusion was that von Papen's post as ambassador at Ankara was bound up with other more important duties.

Just at that time the German Government was pursuing a very active policy in the Near East, especially in Arabia and Palestine, and it was assumed that Papen was to busy himself with inciting the Arabs against the British Empire.

A week after his interview with Hitler, Papen left Germany. He arrived at Istanbul on 27th April, and at Ankara on 30th April. And so Papen returned, in an unexpectedly high position, to the Asia Minor from whence he had fled

in a very inglorious and undignified manner more than twenty years before.

On 1st May he handed his credentials to the Turkish President. On this occasion he made just as hypocritical and mendacious an address as he had five years before when he had taken up his duties as envoy to Austria. This time, it is true, the lies implicit in his declaration were revealed after four months instead of four years.

This address of Papen's, made in Ankara on 1st May, exactly four months before Germany's war of aggression on Poland, was worded thus :

'Your Excellency ! I am happy to represent my country in Turkey, which is bound to Germany by feelings of old friendship. My task in Turkey will consist in cementing this friendship.

'The Great Reich nourishes no aggressive intentions against any country. The Führer's aim is that Germany should live peacefully, having recovered her own rights within a really pacified Europe.'

Comment is superfluous.

In Turkey Papen behaved just as he had done in Austria. As a beginning, he stayed only two and a half weeks in the country which was his allotted sphere. In the middle of May the Anglo-Turkish Agreement was concluded, and this as a start was no good omen for Papen's moves in Ankara. A few days after the conclusion of the Treaty, on the 17th May, to be precise, Papen left Turkey and returned to Germany.

Just at that time Hitler was inspecting the Western Defences in the Saar. Papen went to Wallersfangen and had the opportunity for another talk with Hitler which lasted this time even longer. Papen reported that he had had occasion to meet the Russian Ambassador in Istanbul and in Ankara, and that the representative of the Soviet in Turkey showed a distinct inclination, not only to inform his Government of Papen's proposals, but possibly also to carry on further negotiations with him at a neutral spot not under observation.

Thereupon Hitler, who had come to an understanding with Ribbentrop, retailed to Papen all his important instructions for the groundwork of a Germano-Russian treaty.

After a stay of about a fortnight in the Saar, which was occupied to a considerable extent in receiving fresh directions, Herr von Papen returned to Turkey on 2nd June 1939.

*Papen's Secret Negotiations for the Russian Pact*

In 1939, Terentiev was the Russian Ambassador in Ankara. Since the seat of the Turkish Government had been established in Ankara in recent years, the Embassies of the Foreign States also had to be stationed in this city in Asia Minor. Istanbul, formerly as Constantinople the capital of the Sultans, is to-day an important trading centre. It is the chief port in Turkey, and a particularly beautiful city. But it lies on the Bosphorus; and consequently in the event of war it is far more vulnerable from the sea than Ankara situated far inland. Moreover it is but a few miles by land from the Greek and Bulgarian frontiers. For strategic, administrative and political reasons Kemal Pasha therefore preferred to make Ankara the capital of his new Turkey.

But Ankara is a sober modern city, whilst Istanbul still unites the magic of the Orient with all the beauty of nature. Foreign diplomats frequently stay at Istanbul, and after days of recuperation by the Bosphorus or in the Princes Islands close to Istanbul they travel to Ankara to perform their official duties.

Papen and Terentiev, the Russian Ambassador, had repeatedly met in Ankara but naturally only on official occasions, because until June 1939 relations between Germany and the Soviet had been none of the best. After Papen had returned to Turkey following his meeting with Hitler at the Western fortifications, he passed some weeks of the hot summer of 1939 by the Bosphorus.

The Russian Ambassador, Terentiev, did the same.

And here on motor-boat trips which they took together on the Bosphorus, and which were kept as secret as possible,

the two ambassadors laid the foundations of the new agreement between Hitler and Stalin.

The Turkish newspaper *Yeni Sabah* reported that Papen had several times been observed in company with the Russian Ambassador. Each had his own motor-boat. In the middle of the Bosphorus, occasionally also in the Sea of Marmara or the Black Sea, the two boats had a rendezvous, and the ambassadors joined each other in one of them. And in this romantic way, without disturbance from outside, unobserved by undesirable curious eyes, the concept of a Russo-German agreement could be sketched in day-long deliberation. This draft, after numerous references to Moscow and Berlin, finally blossomed into a positive pact. The report in the *Yeni Sabah* was never denied by either side; the fact of these encounters between Papen and Terentiev was furthermore confirmed in Turkish official quarters. And the first official German communiqué regarding the conclusion of the Russo-German pact stated that Papen, with Herr von Ribbentrop, was jointly responsible for its conclusion. Since Herr von Papen had not been in Moscow nor had he returned to Germany before the latter half of August his collaboration could only have been supplied in the form of secret meetings with Terentiev.

The Russo-German treaty took quite a different form in the original outlines of Papen and Terentiev. It was far more favourable to Germany than the later arrangements which were signed in Moscow. Stray reports published by the Russian and Turkish Press allow one to reconstruct approximately the contents of the treaty visualised by Papen and Terentiev.

During Papen's negotiations in June and July it was still by no means certain whether Poland would offer resistance to German aggression. The original draft had envisaged two eventualities: that of the voluntary handing over of Danzig and the Corridor, and that of war.

In the one case Danzig and the Corridor were to fall to the Reich and the Soviet was to have part of White Russia.

In the event of war between Germany and Poland the Soviet was to follow a benevolent neutrality in favour of Germany, and in return for this, after an eventual occupation of Poland by Germany, it was to receive White Russia and the eastern portion of Polish Ukraine (the territory east of Lemberg and Stanislaw, excluding the Polish petroleum wells).

The remaining points in the treaty were to come into force independently of these alternatives.

First it was provided that the Soviet should break off the negotiations with England and France which had been in progress for several weeks and conclude a non-aggression pact with Germany which in addition to mutual benevolent neutrality was to provide for reciprocal economic support.

The Soviet Union was to agree to supply raw materials, principally crude oil, cotton, minerals and foodstuffs; to open trade routes to China and in this way to facilitate the transport of raw materials from China to Germany.

Germany was to bind herself to supply finished goods, machines, automobiles, aeroplanes, war materials and factory equipment, to provide technicians for the establishing of factories, the training of the workers and the carrying out of special processes.

Germany was also to allow Russia a free hand in the Far East in the internal affairs of China and in action against Japan; and a free hand in the Baltic.

Russia, on her side, would agree that all inhabitants of German origin either in Russia itself, in the Baltic or in that part of Poland which might be occupied by Russia, should be repatriated to Germany.

Further, a mutual press and propaganda agreement was provided for. On the strength of this, the parties to the agreement were to cease attacks on each other in the press and on the radio, and in Germany a political amnesty for a number of leading Communists was to be decreed.

Decisions on important questions of foreign policy were to be preceded by a mutual understanding. Each of the States bound itself to let the other have a free hand politically

where the immediate interests of its own nation were not threatened.

Finally the Soviet Union, as the former ally of Turkey, was to put most vigorous pressure on the Government at Ankara with the object of drawing Turkey into the Russo-German front. On this condition Germany would assure the Soviet freedom of action in the Black Sea.

Once more Papen's imagination had run away with him. Firstly, there was a violent protest from Berlin over the wholesale supply to the Soviet of war materials and other finished goods which were so necessary to Germany. Then the matter of Russia having a free hand in the Black Sea encountered difficulties in many quarters in the Wilhelmstrasse, for by it the Government's Arabian plan would have been endangered.

In the middle of August Papen was summoned to Salzburg to meet Hitler and Ribbentrop. He was obliged to alter his draft treaty very materially. Moreover, since the outbreak of war against Poland was then only a matter of days, the Reich had to tolerate far-reaching concessions to the Soviet, chiefly because Russia, in spite of negotiations with Germany, had continued parallel negotiations with France and Great Britain. Russia was threatening to conclude a treaty with London if Berlin did not knuckle under at once. (The same threat was naturally used to the British and French representatives, but the Governments in London and Paris were not labouring under the same constraint as Berlin and consequently did not submit on the essential points.)

Papen had hoped that he would travel to Moscow with Ribbentrop and so receive in person the laurels of success. But once more he was compelled to realise that he was only considered a second string by Hitler. His name was indeed mentioned in the official communiqué as one of the initiators of the new treaty, but it was Ribbentrop, accompanied by his staff, who went to Moscow, and he did not let the opportunity slip of boosting the auspicious event as a great personal success.

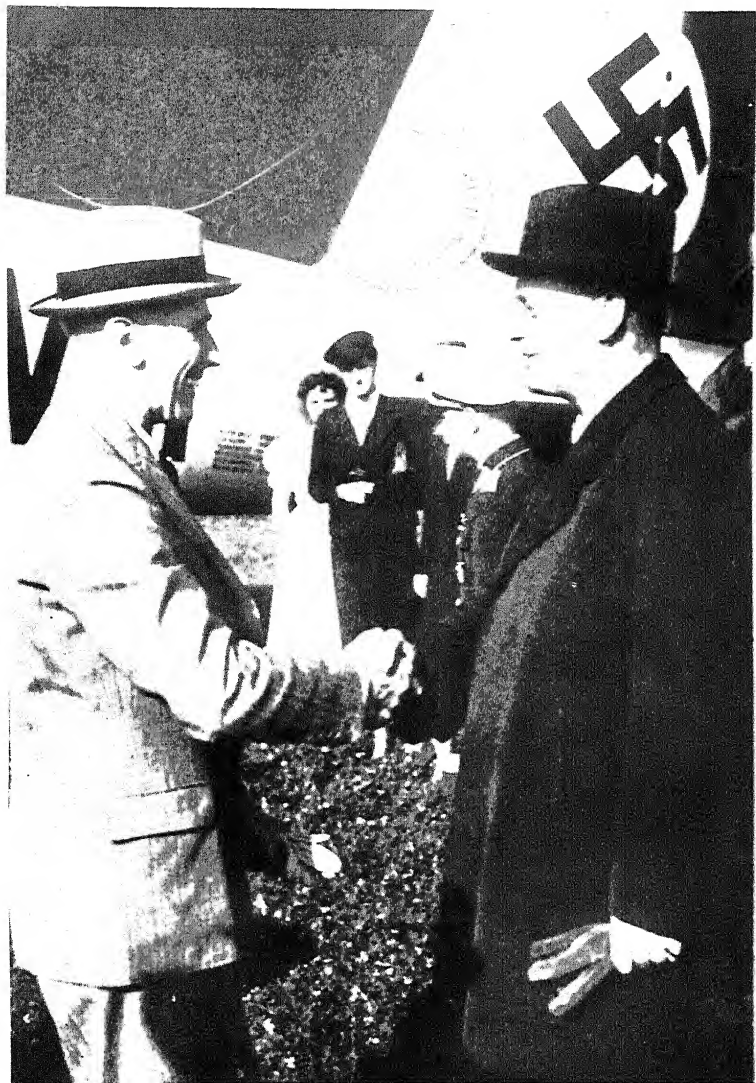
That the treaty immediately had to be altered to a considerable degree to Germany's disadvantage, and that the Russians after the German march into Poland were not content with the boundaries provided by the treaty, is as well known as the fact that its economic provisions were not kept, or only to a very minor degree.

Herr von Papen returned to Ankara. He relied on the Russians' putting the necessary pressure on Turkey to break the Turkish alliance with the Western Powers. But Papen himself wished to leave no stone unturned to make his activities in Turkey a success for Hitler. He had repeated interviews with Sarajoglu, the Turkish Foreign Minister, with the object of explaining that after the conclusion of the Russo-German pact a treaty between Turkey, England and France was useless.

When these interviews showed no signs of success he tried President İnönü himself. In a long conversation Papen tried to make clear to the President, among other things, that the German Army had certainly saved Turkey in the World War and that consequently the Turkish Government was under certain obligations to Germany.

This highly tactless remark of Papen's caused extreme irritation in political circles in Turkey. The President was generally quoted as having replied that the Turkish Army had been strong enough on its own. He was supposed to have added that the Turkish forces had only mustered for her great victory over the Greeks when the German Army had left Turkey. In any case, Turkey in the absence of German assistance had been offered a far more favourable Peace Treaty.

As this line of attack showed itself to be not only impracticable but even dangerous, the German Government now ranged itself wholeheartedly behind Moscow on the Turkish question. Sarajoglu, the Turkish Foreign Minister, had been invited to Moscow at the same time as Ribbentrop, in order to be raked by the cross-fire of German and Russian diplomacy. But the equanimity and patience of the Turkish diplomat had been underestimated in Moscow. Sarajoglu



*Associated Press*

PAPEN BIDDING FAREWELL TO RIBBENTROP AT THE SALZBURG AIRPORT ON AUGUST 23, 1939. AS RIBBENTROP WAS LEAVING FOR MOSCOW TO SIGN THE RUSSO-GERMAN PACT, WHICH HAD BEEN INITIATED BY PAPEN.



showed no impatience when the Soviet Government gave him the cold-shoulder. He took cognisance of the fact that Molotov had more urgent business with Ribbentrop and the Baltic delegates. He spent days strolling about Moscow observing justly and accurately Russian life and industry. And whilst the Russian diplomats believed that they were making him impatient and irritable, the Turkish statesman had the opportunity of drawing comparisons between conditions in Russia and the possible advantages of an alliance with the Soviet, and the might and backing of the Western Powers.

When, after days spent cooling his heels, Sarajoglu was again received by Molotov, his resistance to a rapprochement between Turkey and the Soviet Union had become even more marked. Molotov wished to force on him the abandonment of the Turkish alliance with the Western Powers. The Turkish Foreign Minister was not to be shaken from his position either by threats or promises, but preferred after his stay of some weeks in Moscow to return to Ankara without a pact with Russia.

A few days later the agreement between Turkey and the Western Powers was substantially improved and made wider in scope.

Papen's first attempt in this direction was consequently abortive. It would not be doing him justice, however, to assume that he failed to undertake further attempts immediately and fresh intrigues on another basis.

#### *Papen acts for and against Russia*

The next chapter in Papen's efforts is particularly interesting because he now endeavoured at one and the same time to make use of Russian help in Turkey and to incite the Balkan States against Russia.

Papen was not at all in agreement with the way the Russo-German pact had shaped itself. He was also personally disappointed that not he but Ribbentrop had been present at the final stages in Moscow to take the honours. Whilst officially he had to maintain the policy

of friendship with the Soviet which Germany had initiated, he appears, unofficially of course, to have incited the Balkan States against Russia. It is not even certain whether he did this out of his own passion for intrigue or whether the Hitler Government had itself started a game of double-dealing with the Soviet Union.

Be that as it may, in the middle of November the Turkish newspapers published the news that Herr von Papen, in the name of the German Government, had made this offer both to Turkey and to Rumania :

1. To supply German arms and munitions for the increased armament of these two countries against Russian Black Sea aspirations.
2. To put at their disposal plans, engineers and supplies of material for the erection in Turkey and Rumania of modern lines of defence against the Soviet.

The German Government, it is true, had issued and published vigorous denials of any such intentions immediately after the news had been made known. It was stated that this ' was a scandalous attempt on the part of some of the most influential Turkish newspapers to disturb the good relations existing between Germany and Soviet Russia '.

Herr von Papen handed the Government in Ankara an official protest from which he let it be seen that the report was looked upon as constituting armed assistance for the Western Powers.

The Turkish Press reacted to this protest with fresh attacks on Papen, and Hussein Djahid Yaltchin, a Member of Parliament and the publisher of *Yeni Sabah*, who was one of Papen's keenest opponents, even declared that he could establish the truth of the reports quoted. He added sarcastically that Russo-German friendship could not be very reliable if it were troubled by reports of this nature.

There was a second and still more violent clash between Papen and Hussein Djahid, the Deputy, in the early days of December 1939. As Papen saw that he could not play off the Balkan States so easily against Russia, he now pursued a more roundabout way and set out to intimidate

Turkey by means of Russian threats. At the instance of Germany, both *Pravda*, the great Russian Government newspaper, and *Communist International*, the organ of the Moscow Comintern, published sharp criticisms of Turkish foreign policy. The Soviet attacks included among other items the following :

‘ Turkey has concluded a pact of mutual assistance with belligerent imperialistic Powers and has thereby entered the arena of war.

‘ She has left the path of neutrality and has accepted military undertakings towards Britain and France which are of such a serious nature that they will soon make themselves clearly noticeable in the whole structure of Turkish foreign policy.

‘ The Turkish people are unable to understand why Turkish Government circles, instead of preferring a strengthening of the friendship with the Soviet Union, should have made a pact with the oldest and worst enemies of Turkey’s independence.

‘ It is no secret that during the Moscow negotiations for a pact of mutual assistance with Russia the Turkish delegation played the not very enviable rôle of henchmen of British diplomacy which, setting its face against the traditional friendship between Russia and Turkey, tried to drive a wedge between Germany and Russia.

‘ British diplomacy then tried to draw Russia into a combination of Powers which was chiefly directed against Germany, and also against possible enemies of Britain and France in the Mediterranean.

‘ Hoping to make others pull their chestnuts out of the fire the Anglo-French imperialists will try to extend the war to the Balkans to create there a military front against Germany. They want to make Turkey a basis for such operations.’

The article states that as a result of the alliance with the Western Powers, Turkey declares herself to be a fighter for democracy.

‘ This,’ it continues, ‘ is rather strange, because everyone

knows that the present Turkish régime has little to do with true democracy.

‘Owing to the rapprochement between the ruling Turkish classes and the Anglo-French imperialists, Turkey’s independence, attained through great efforts and sacrifices by the Turkish people, is now seriously threatened.’

This Russian article, which in the original was actually longer, Papen had printed at the press of the *Türkische Post*, the German newspaper of Istanbul, and sent copies to all the Turkish newspapers, journalists and politicians. On the first page of this document there was a small note: ‘Pressdienst der Deutschen Botschaft’ (Press Service of the German Embassy).

### *Turkey demands Papen's Recall*

The extraordinary tactlessness of an officially accredited diplomat in having such attacks reprinted and distributed by the press service of the Embassy brought on the stage the Turkish national press with the demand that Papen must be recalled. Hussein Djahid published on 8th December 1939 another article in *Yeni Sabah* in which he said:

‘When an Embassy so far forgets its high position and dignity as to take on itself the distribution on Turkish territory of an article written against Turkey, it thereupon loses all right to the respect we owe to a diplomatic mission.

‘We are just as surprised at the imprudent audacity of the Germans as at the courtesy which borders on indifference of our police and Government.

‘Is the Turkish Attorney-General of the opinion that anonymous and subversive pamphlets should be distributed in this country with impunity?

‘The wings of German propaganda in Turkey must be clipped. As the Germans profess disdain for the weak and pusillanimous and respect only force, we must reply in language they understand.

‘If German propaganda does not disappear with the shortest possible delay, then *Yeni Sabah* will start the publication of Captain von Rintelen’s *The Dark Invader*.

'We think that certain diplomats will then pack their bags and be gone in quick time. If this does not suffice, other means will be found.'

Simultaneously the Turkish newspaper *Tan* brought out a series of articles against German methods of propaganda in Turkey. In these not only was Papen's rôle suitably described but also the activities of the Istanbul correspondent of the 'Deutschen Nachrichtenburo' (German News Agency) were placed under the microscope. A demand was made for Papen's recall and for the recall or expulsion of this correspondent.

By reason of these press attacks and on account of the anger widely felt in Turkish diplomatic circles, the Turkish Public Prosecutor received orders to begin an investigation into the publishing of this Russian propaganda. The police searched the premises of the *Türkische Post*. There was no mistake about it; the article from *Pravda* had been printed there. At the enquiry the chief editor of the *Türkische Post* admitted that he had received his orders for printing direct from the German Embassy. When this evidence was confirmed the Turkish Foreign Ministry warned Herr von Papen that the Turkish Government was of no mind to tolerate such offences. Simultaneously the Turkish Ambassador in Berlin received instructions to make an energetic protest over the incident and Papen's misbehaviour.

Once more, as in Austria, Papen after this signal exposure decided on a policy of 'wait and see'. On 10th December 1939 he left Turkey 'to make his official report in Berlin'. And the German Government appointed Baron von Lersner to look after its interests in Turkey.

But Papen was not yet officially recalled from his post in Ankara. In January 1940 it was, it is true, divulged that Papen was in the running for the Embassy at Rome. But at the time that this book goes to press nothing is conclusively settled regarding the further employment of Papen's art of intrigue. . . .

After the lines written above I have placed a few dots

purposely ; for this chapter cannot yet be finished. Here is manifest the difficulty of writing with full justice the biography of a man who is still alive, and a man who lives with a special intensity and is energetically active. During the first sixty years of his life Papen has prepared so many, mostly unpleasant, surprises for himself and the world around him that one cannot anticipate the number and quality of the surprises he still has in store. It is not to be supposed that this man will suddenly develop into an honest and forthright politician, into a benefactor of humanity or a self-sacrificing individual. But it is to be assumed that, in spite of the fact that he is by no means young in years, as Hitler's Intriguer No. 1 of the Third Reich he will strive with all his might to gain fame by doing harm and bringing others to disaster.

At the date when this book is finished, Franz von Papen is still German Ambassador to Turkey. It is therefore impossible to pronounce a comprehensive judgment on his activities in this post as has been done in the other sections of his life story. In the interests of Turkey it is to be hoped that Papen's ambassadorship in Ankara will not be accompanied by grave disasters to the Turkish Republic or any of its people, disasters such as have befallen other countries and people with whom Herr von Papen has come into contact.

At the close of 1939 Turkey was visited by appalling calamities of nature, earthquakes and floods. One would not dream of connecting these catastrophes with Herr von Papen's presence in Turkey. But it is possible that the stamina and political security of Turkey may have been threatened in one way or another by these visitations. It may be that through them Turkish resistance to the Soviet has been slightly diminished, and consequently the pride and rigid inflexibility of their attitude will abate by a hair's breadth. We must not assume that this will be the case. For in Turkey, a country so steeled and tested, earthquakes and floods with their terrible accompaniment of destruction of life and property are not wont to produce the same set-

backs as would be produced in other countries whose peoples are not so inured and attached to the soil.

But unfortunately there is no doubt that Herr von Papen, who has no niceties of choice in his methods, sees in these circumstances a fresh chance of finding in Turkey new starting-points for his beneficent activities.

It is fortunate that new Turkey has completely conquered the decadent period of the last Sultans. She will meet catastrophes of nature and other visitations with the same strength and the same power of regeneration and will know how to meet any new intrigues of Herr von Papen.

The pact with the Soviet Union which Herr von Papen engineered from Ankara was without a doubt a personal success for him. One can only hope that this alliance will also in the result appear a success to the world. Not, however, as the success of Herr von Papen and the Third Reich, but as a stroke of good fortune for the Democracies who were enabled in good time to realise the tendencies and dangers which until the autumn of 1939 had slumbered unrecognised in the Soviet Union.

## CONCLUSION

### *Lackey or Gravedigger?*

In the long and eventful life of Herr von Papen two leit-motivs besides the adventurous have constantly stood out in relief. First, he is a man who has brought death or disaster to everyone whom he has served or with whom he has come into contact. Secondly, it was Herr von Papen who held Hitler's stirrup and was one of those who prepared the way for the new World War.

In all Herr von Papen's activities it is clearly seen that he has never brought luck to anybody. In this present instance this should be taken as a good sign. For the man for whom Papen has done most is Hitler. And much of the harm and evil which he has wrought in his long life would be cancelled out to a certain extent if he were to bring death to the man to whom he served as lackey. In this sense we may identify Hitler with the whole National Socialist régime, for Herr von Papen in his exertions for Hitler has served the whole system.

Hitler, the Apostle of Evil, has made and continues to make use of Papen to sow the seeds of fresh evil and to give the world ever fresh proof of his incarnation of the Anti-Christ. He does not do this because he loves Papen and trusts him. And he certainly does not do it because Herr von Papen was, as it were, trustfully laid in his hands as the legacy of President von Hindenburg. He turns to Herr von Papen again and again because he wishes to place the bad propensities of this adventurer in the service of the bad propensities of National Socialism.

Actually Hitler despises from the bottom of his heart his former Vice-Chancellor and present Ambassador on special



mission. And Papen knows it. But we have seen that Adolf Hitler is not discriminating in the selection of his tools when it is a question of achieving successes on which he has set his heart; and that Papen does not show any scruples in choosing persons to assist him to rise in the world or satisfy his ambitions.

The union of Hitler and Papen is unnatural. One knows that each party is pondering on how to clear the other out of the way and claim success as his own perquisite. It is possible that Hitler will be successful in this before Papen can bring death to him. Probably, however, the contrary will happen and Herr von Papen by his intrigues and evil activities will be Hitler's doom as he has been for all other friends and accomplices of his.

One cannot and should not anticipate history. At present the effects of the capitulation of Austria, the annexation of Czechoslovakia and principally the treaty with the Soviet Union are unknown. All these events have come about with Papen's complicity. As long as the result of the war remains in abeyance, and as long as the final attitude of the Soviet Union is obscure, there is a slender chance that this violence and this treachery will benefit Hitler. But all indications point to the fact that wrong will not triumph and Hitler by this very treaty with Russia will meet a quicker end than he expected since Herr von Papen was the prime-mover in this pact.

Here, probably, is the connection between lackey and gravedigger. Herr von Papen strained every nerve to assist Hitler to power. He has striven with all the means at his disposal to expand this power of Hitler's, with means which bear in them the germ of death.

I am compelled to conclude this book with a question-mark. But the question for me is not whether or no Herr von Papen will dig Hitler's grave. This question I answer with an immediate yes, although I make no claim to be a prophet.

The only question that remains open is, When?

## INDEX

- Abyssinian War, 236, 241  
 Adam, Colonel Walther, Chief of the Austrian Press Department, 240, 260  
 Admiralty, German, 36, 54  
 Agreement, German-Austrian of 11th July 1936, 236-9, 242, 244, 245  
 Albert, Dr., German propagandist in U.S.A., 59, 60, 64  
 Allenby, General, 17, 76, 77  
 Alvensleben-Neugattersleben, Count, 91, 172, 173  
 American Government, 23, 41, 42, 44, 62, 64, 66, 82, 83  
 American Press, 17, 62, 79  
 Amsinck & Co., New York, 40, 67  
 Anglo-Turkish Agreement, 265, 267, 273, 276  
*Angriff*, Der, Goebbels' newspaper, 214  
 Ankara, 264, 266, 268, 272, 273, 277, 278  
 Anschluss, 119, 120, 232, 233, 237  
 Arabia, 72, 76, 266, 271  
 Archibald, James J. F., American publicist, 61, 62  
 Arras, Easter battle, 71  
 Asia Minor, 23, 24, 72, 73, 74, 76, 77, 79, 266, 268  
 Atlanta jail, 78, 80  
 Atlas Line, 67  
 Austria, 15, 21, 24, 32, 120, 121, 139, 220, 224-62, 267, 277, 281  
 Auswaertiges Amt (Foreign Office), Berlin, 39, 43, 44, 81  
 Balkan States, 121, 273, 274, 275  
 Bavaria, 139  
 Bavarian National Party, 137  
 Beck, Fritz, Papen's collaborator, 216  
 Belgium, 29, 36, 87, 263  
 Berchtesgaden, see Wachenfeld, Haus  
 Bernstorff, Count, German Ambassador in Washington, 34, 35, 39, 43, 44, 46, 80, 81, 82  
 'Betont-Nationalen' in Austria, 234, 238, 241  
 Binder, Stephan, 78  
 Bismarck, Fuerst, 95, 107, 124  
 Bismarck, Herr von, German Secretary of State, 187  
 Black Sea, 269, 271, 274  
 'Black Tom', Pier in New York Harbour, 68, 69, 81  
 Blomberg, General von, 166, 167, 252  
 Boch-Galhau, 28, 29  
 Bohse, Herr von, Papen's press chief, 24, 188, 190, 216, 217  
 Bomb Outrages:  
     in America, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45  
     in Austria, 232, 246, 247-50  
     in Mexico, 31-5  
 Boniface, Mr., solicitor, 54  
 Bopp, Dr., German Consul-General in Seattle, 42, 67, 75  
 Bosphorus, 268, 269  
 Boy-Ed, Captain von, German Naval Attaché in Washington, 33, 34, 44, 46, 53, 55, 62, 63, 64, 80, 81, 82  
 Bracht, Dr., Mayor of Essen, 135, 136  
 Brauchitsch, General von, 252, 265, 266  
 Braun, Freiherr von, German Reichsminister, 126, 127  
 Braun, Prime Minister of Prussia, 112, 115, 132, 133, 134  
 Braunschweig, 115  
 Brenner Pass, Italian troops on the, 228, 236  
 Bridgeport Projectile Company, 37, 38, 63  
 British High Command, 76  
 British White Paper, 42, 43, 57, 65-9, 82  
 Brüning, Dr. Heinrich, German Reichschancellor 1930-32:  
     opponent of the Herrenklub, 90, 91  
     rupture with Papen, 93, 98, 99  
     contrasted with Papen, 94, 160  
     his political development, 95  
     and solution of the reparations question, 96, 131  
     bans the S.A., 97, 110, 122

- Brüning, Dr. Heinrich, German Reichschancellor 1930-32 (*contd.*):  
 his supporters, 105  
 relation to Hindenburg, 106, 107, 122-4  
 relation to Schleicher, 108, 109  
 attacked by Hugenberg, 114, 115  
 measures against the Economic Crisis, 116, 118-21  
 resignation, 122-5, 127  
 dismissed, 128  
 refuses to co-operate with Hitler, 154, 157, 162  
 compared to Schuschnigg, 260
- Buchheit, German author, 68
- Bünz, German Consul-General, 78
- Bürckel, Joseph, Nazi Commissar in Austria, 255, 257
- Burke, Frank, American detective, 60
- Canada, 42, 43
- Caprivi, German Reichschancellor, 164
- Caputh, Goebbels' country house near Potsdam, 143
- Carinthia, 227, 232, 235, 247
- Carranza, President of Mexico, 33, 35
- Casement, Sir Roger, 43, 75
- Caserta, political agent, 66
- Catholic Action in Germany, 24, 98, 102, 115, 116, 187, 188, 189, 216
- Catholic Church, 87, 100, 101, 104, 105, 115, 116, 127, 182, 183, 185, 186, 201, 202
- Catholics, 25, 127, 185, 191, 201, 240, 260
- Central Europe, 24, 87, 120, 241, 244, 260, 264
- Central Powers, 73
- Centre, *see* Zentrum Party
- Cheque counterfoils, Papen's, 23, 42, 43, 57, 65, 66-9
- Ciano, Count, Italian Foreign Minister, 256
- Comintern, 117, 275
- Communist Party, German, 105, 106, 107, 112, 113, 117, 133, 137, 147-9, 154, 155, 181, 201, 270
- Concordat between Rome and Berlin, 185, 186, 228
- Corridor, the Polish, 269
- Credit-Anstalt, Austrian, 120
- Currency Regulations, 121
- Curtius, Dr., German Foreign Minister, 119
- Czechoslovakia, 121, 139, 244, 261, 265, 266, 281
- Danatbank, 96, 120
- Danzig, 269
- Dark Invader, The*, 46-55, 276
- Democratic Party, German, 95, 107
- Der Tag*, Berlin newspaper, 114
- Detten, Herr von, Papen's private secretary, 188, 216, 217
- 'Deutschen Nachrichtenburo', 277
- Diehls, Prussian Government councillor, 134
- Dietrich, Hitler's press chief, 168, 169
- Djahid Yaltchin, Turkish editor and M.P., 274, 275, 276
- Dollfuss, Dr. Engelbert, Austrian Chancellor:  
 resistance against National Socialism, 182  
 murdered by Nazis, 224-6, 239, 249
- Dresdner Bank, 96, 120
- Duestenberg, German political leader, 115
- Dülmen, Papen's speech at, 98
- Dumba, Dr., Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in Washington, 34, 61, 62
- Du-Pont Plant, Delaware, 41
- East Elbe Junkers, 88, 122, 123, 127
- East Prussia, 26, 123
- Eastern Europe, 25
- Ebert, German Reichspresident, 92
- Egypt, 76
- Ehrhardt, German putschist, 89
- English Army, 24
- Epp, General von, 108
- 'Erbsälzer', 18, 26, 27, 169
- Erzberger, German politician, 94
- Falkenhayn, General von, 72
- Falmouth, 23, 33, 42, 58, 64, 70, 74, 79, 263
- Fatherland Front, *see* Patriotic Front
- Faulhaber, Cardinal, 185
- Fay, German inventor, 49, 50
- Feldmann, German bookseller, 78
- Fey, Major Emil, Austrian Minister, 239, 240
- Finland, 25
- Foreign Office, Berlin, *see* Auswaertiges Amt
- Fouché, 16
- France, 29, 32, 36, 37, 87, 118, 120, 121, 263, 270, 271, 272, 275
- Frick, Dr., German Minister of Interior, 110, 140, 148, 164, 165, 176, 179
- Fritsch, General von, 252

- Fugger, Countess Vera, wife of Dr. Schuschnigg, 260
- Funder, Dr., editor of the *Reichspost*, Vienna, 240, 256, 260
- Funk, Dr. Walter, German Minister of Economics, 140
- Fürstenburg estate in Mecklenburg, 130, 131
- Gauss, Dr., German legal adviser, 81
- Gayl, Freiherr von, German Minister of Interior, 126, 127
- Gereke, Dr., German Secretary of State, 176, 177, 181, 187
- German Army :  
 Papen's entrance into, 29  
 post of Military Attaché, 32  
 Papen's Front-Line service, 71  
 drive from Turkey against Arabia, 72  
 activity in Turkey, 76  
 Papen quits, as a Major of the Reserve, 83, 106  
 prepared for a march into Austria, 248, 258  
 enters Austria, 259, 263
- German General Staff, 29, 54, 67, 68, 73
- German People's Party, 95
- Germania*, Papen's newspaper, 93, 94, 102, 210, 220
- Gestapo : 24  
 murders Strasser, 166  
 arrests Dr. Gereke, Secretary of State, 177, 181, 187  
 expansion under Goering, 179  
 action against Papen's friends, 214-18  
 murders Dr. Jung, 215  
 'The day of the great purge' (30th June 1934), 215-18  
 jails Papen, 218-20  
 arrests Schuschnigg, 238, 259, 260  
 murders Baron von Ketteler, 251  
 Headquarters in Hotel 'Metropole' in Vienna, 259  
 mass arrests in Vienna, 261
- Glaise-Horstenau, Dr. Edmund, Austrian Minister, 235, 238, 241
- Gleichen, Freiherr von der, German politician, 88, 89, 90, 159
- Globocnik, Nazi leader in Austria, 248
- Goebbels, Dr. Joseph, German Minister of Propaganda :  
 attacks Hindenburg, 106
- Goebbels, Dr. Joseph, German Minister of Propaganda (*contd.*):  
 as Hitler's adviser, 143, 144  
 his diary, 143, 151, 152  
 Minister of Propaganda, 188  
 attacked by Papen in the Marburg speech, 190, 191, 193, 208  
 suppresses the publication of the Marburg speech, 191, 210, 211  
 conflict with Papen, 212-14  
 demands proceedings against Papen, 220
- Gömbös, Prime Minister of Hungary, 231
- Goering, Hermann, Field-Marshal :  
 interview with Hindenburg, 127, 128  
 visit to Haus Wachenfeld, 140  
 versus Papen in the Reichstag, 147-9  
 Minister under Hitler, 175-80  
 rules ruthlessly in Prussia, 177-9, 221  
 his 'Shooting Permit', 178  
 journey to Rome, 182  
 Prime Minister of Prussia, 182, 183  
 aspires to the Presidency of the Reich, 189  
 attacked by Papen in his Marburg speech, 190, 205  
 speech against Röhm's 'new revolution', 212  
 wants proceedings against Papen, 220  
 visited by Dr. Schmidt, 243  
 intends visit to Austria, 243  
 interview with Mussolini in Berlin, 244
- Goltz, von der, 66
- Gompers, Samuel, Leader of the American Trade Unions, 53
- Great Britain (British Government), 32, 37, 42, 65, 77, 78, 139, 271, 272
- Grey, Sir Edward, 41
- Groener, General von, 107-9
- Guertner, Dr., German Minister of Justice, 126, 176
- Hainburg in Austria, 25, 251
- Hall, Admiral Sir Reginald, 55
- Hamburg-Amerika Line, 67
- Harzburg Front, 115
- Hassel, German Ambassador in Rome, 236, 252
- Haugwitz, Count, Captain on the German General Staff, 67

- Heiden, Konrad, German author, 86, 109, 216
- Heimwehr, Austrian, 227, 239
- Herrenklub, The, 85, 88-93, 101, 125, 126, 159, 215, 218
- Hess, Rudolf, the Führer's Deputy, 246-50, 257
- Heynen, Carl, 37, 38
- Himmler, Heinrich, Chief of the Gestapo, 259
- Hindenburg, Colonel Oskar von, son of the Field-Marshal and Reichs president :  
 conference with Schleicher and Röhm, 111, 115  
 with Schleicher and Meissner against Hitler, 141  
 negotiations with Meissner and Papen, 170  
 informed of an intended Schleicher putsch, 172, 173
- Hindenburg, Field-Marshal Paul von, President of the German Reich :  
 election in 1925, 92, 93, 110  
 opinion of Brüning, 95  
 relations with Brüning, 97, 122-4  
 as power factor in the Reich, 104-7  
 indignation about Groener, 107, 123  
 enthusiastic about Papen as Chancellor, 127  
 friendship with Papen, 127, 144, 162, 229  
 summons Papen, 128, 129  
 resists Hitler, 137-9, 140, 141, 144, 145, 156-8, 169  
 decree for the Dissolution of the Reichstag, 147-9  
 special confidence in Papen, 157, 172, 177  
 refuses Schleicher Reichstag dissolution, 165, 171, 172  
 appoints Hitler Reichschancellor, 174  
 threatened by the S.A., 179-81  
 signs of decay, 189  
 question of succession, 189  
 congratulates Papen on his Marburg speech, 211  
 saves Papen from being murdered, 218-20  
 last letter to Papen, 228, 230  
 death, 228
- Hindenburg camarilla, 138
- Hintze, Admiral von, 32-5
- Hirtliefer, Deputy Prime Minister in Prussia, 133, 134
- Hitler, Adolf, 15, 18, 21, 22, 24, 25, 79, 82, 86, 88, 95, 96, 104, 105, 111, 117, 125, 127  
 relations with Hindenburg, 106  
 as Leader of the N.S.D.A.P., 110, 164, 165  
 admiration for Hugenberg, 114-16  
 promises support to the Papen Government, 125, 127, 128  
 audience with Hindenburg, 128, 143-5, 156-8  
 meeting with Schleicher at Fürstenburg, 130, 131  
 campaign against the Social Democrats, 132  
 'Bohemian corporal', nicknamed by Hindenburg, 137, 170  
 breaks his word to Papen, 139-41, 175  
 meets Schleicher at manoeuvres, 140  
 telegram to murderers of Potempa, 142, 145, 151  
 meets Papen at Berlin, 143, 144  
 friction with Papen, 145, 146  
 attempts to overthrow Hindenburg, 146  
 industrial subsidies stopped by Papen, 146, 151, 154, 167  
 rupture with Strasser, 151, 153, 154, 164-6  
 threatens suicide, 152  
 loses ground, 154, 165-7  
 Cologne Agreement with Papen, 163, 167-9  
 appointed Reichschancellor, 163, 168, 169, 173, 174  
 backed by Papen, 166-74  
 decree against S.A. transgressions, 180  
 mistrusts Papen, 182, 184, 223  
 first difficulties as Reichschancellor, 188  
 aspires to the Presidency of the Reich, 189  
 flattered by Papen, 192, 193  
 visit to Mussolini at Venice, 211  
 reproaches Papen on his Marburg speech, 212  
 reports to Hindenburg at Neudeck, 212  
 forces Papen to resign, 218-20  
 condemnation of the Nazi putsch in Austria, 226  
 letter to Papen (Envoy in Austria), 226, 227  
 appoints Papen a member of the N.S.D.A.P., 230, 260

Hitler, Adolf (*contd.*):

- Agreement with Austria of 11th July 1936, 236-9, 242, 244, 245
- summons Papen to Berchtesgaden, 253, 255
- meeting with Schuschnigg at Berchtesgaden, 257, 258
- meets Papen at the Western Wall, 267
- Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, 201, 242
- Hoadley, George W., 38, 39
- Holzweber, murderer of Dr. Dollfuss, 226
- Horn, Werner, 42, 63, 66
- Huerta, President of Mexico, 33-5, 54, 55
- Hugenberg, Geheimrat Dr. Alfred, Minister under Hitler :
  - as power factor in the Reich, 104, 113-15
  - alliance with Hitler to overthrow Brüning, 116
  - proposed as a member of the Hitler Government, 157
  - Minister under Hitler, 169, 171, 175, 176
  - mobilises the Stahlhelm against the S.A., 180, 181
  - leaves the Hitler Government, 185, 187, 221
- Hungary, 121, 231
- Igel, Walter von, Papen's secretary in America, 41, 67
- 'Illegals' in Austria, 228, 232, 234, 235, 237, 246, 247, 249
- India, 24, 74, 78
- Indian revolutionary students, 74, 75, 78
- Industry, German, 104, 105, 114, 116, 119, 146, 153, 161, 167
- Innitzer, Cardinal, Archbishop of Vienna, 233
- Inönü, İsmet, President of Turkey, 265, 267, 268
- Ireland, 24, 75
- Irish Revolutionary Movement, 74, 78, 246
- Irish sailors, 47, 49
- Ismid, 73
- Istanbul, 266, 268, 269, 277
- Italy, 32, 235, 241, 242

Jews, the, 25, 260, 261

Jung, Dr. Edgar, Papen's literary adviser, 24, 102, 184, 188, 190, 210, 215, 216, 222, 264

'Juniklub 1919', 88, 90

Junker, the German, 26, 87, 88, 93, 113, 124, 159, 215, 251

Kaas, Dr., Leader of the Zentrum Party, 128, 129, 185

Kaiser's Empire, 18, 22

Kapp, German putschist, 89

Kemal Pasha, President of Turkey, 265, 268

Ketteler, Baron Emmanuel von, Papen's secretary, 25, 229, 250, 251, 255

Kingsland Plant, 68, 69, 81

Klausener, Geheimrat Dr., Chief of German Catholic Action, 24, 102, 188, 190, 191, 210, 215, 216, 220, 222, 264

Kleist, Captain, 52, 78

Klepper, Dr., Prussian Minister of Finance, 134

Knight, Walter H., 38

Koenig, Inspector, 67

Krebs, Hitler's collaborator, 255, 257

Kriebel, Lieutenant-Colonel, 255, 257

Krupp, German industrialist, 167

Krupp works, German, 39, 114

Kuepferle, German spy, 66

'Labour's National Peace Council', 50, 52

Landowners, the German, 104, 105, 116

Lanke, Theo R., 67

Lausanne Conference (June 1932), 96, 119, 130-2, 160

Leipart, Leader of the German Trade Unions, 153, 158, 164

Leopold, Captain, Leader of the illegal Austrian Nazis, 235, 248

Lersner, Baron von, German diplomat, 277

Liman von Sanders, General, 72, 73

Lindheim, N., 63

*Lokalanzeiger*, Berlin newspaper, 114

Ludwig, Eduard, Austrian Minister, 240, 260

Luxembourg, 29, 87, 92, 126, 263

MacAdoo, American Secretary of State, 60

*Manchester Guardian*, 17, 228

Marburg speech, Papen's, 22, 24, 189-209, 221, 222

Marmara, Sea of, 73, 269

Marx, Dr., Reichschancellor, 92

- Meissner, German Secretary of State,  
125, 126, 141, 142
- Melcher, Police Chief of Essen, 136
- Mexico, 23, 30, 31-5, 40, 63, 78
- Miklas, Wilhelm, President of Austria,  
229, 253
- Millis, Walter, 41
- Molotov, Soviet Prime Minister, 273
- Monarchists, 25, 245, 260
- Moscow, 117, 269, 271, 272, 275
- Mouquet Farm, 71
- Müller, Hermann, Reichschancellor,  
29
- Munition factories in U.S.A., 23, 36,  
37, 38, 41, 44, 69
- Mussolini, Benito :  
opposition to Hitler on the Austrian  
Question, 211, 236  
sends his troops to assist Austria,  
228, 236  
seeks political and economic sup-  
port in Germany, 241  
refuses to receive Schuschnigg, 242  
State visit to Berlin, 244  
influences Schuschnigg to visit  
Hitler, 256  
protests against Schuschnigg trial,  
259
- 'National Betonten' in Austria, *see*  
'Betont-Nationalen'
- National Socialism : 15, 22, 26, 33,  
86, 96, 97, 110, 117, 145  
as ally for Papen, 99  
against the Church, 99, 100, 182, 183  
as power factor in the Reich, 104,  
109-11  
opposition against Brüning, 105  
assists Schleicher, 106  
battles against the Reichsbanner,  
112  
in the factories, 113, 153  
in the Harzburg Front, 115  
as the 'Muck Magnet', 121  
justice under the N.S., 122, 123  
rapprochement with Schleicher and  
Papen, 130  
victory in Reichstag Elections, July  
1932, 137  
claims for a Hitler Government,  
140  
murder at Potempa, 141-5  
decline, 151-4, 165-7  
courts the workers, 151-5  
strikes with the Communists, 154  
losses in the Reichstag Elections,  
November 1932, 155
- National Socialism (*contd.*):  
as a bulwark against Communism,  
169  
relations with the Reichswehr, 177  
in power in Prussia, 178, 179  
the only Party in Germany, 181  
domination in the Reich, 222  
Papen becomes a member of, 231  
banned in Austria, 235  
amnesty is granted by Schuschnigg,  
237
- Nazi putsch in Austria, 224, 225, 227,  
231, 249
- Neudeck, Hindenburg's estate in East  
Prussia, 123, 126, 171, 212, 213
- Neurath, Freiherr von, German  
Foreign Minister, 126, 176, 242,  
243, 252
- Neutrality, of U.S.A., 21, 22, 35,  
36
- Neuwerk, 26
- New York Times*, 55
- New York World*, 60
- Oil wells, Polish, 270
- 'Osthilfe', 116, 171
- 'Ostmärkische Sturmsharen', 227
- Palestine, 23, 24, 73, 76, 79, 266
- Papal chamberlain, Papen as, 25, 87,  
99, 185, 260
- Papen, Marthe von, 28, 61
- Papen, Wolf von, 27
- Patriotic Front in Austria, 237, 241,  
242, 245, 260
- Pertner, Dr., Austrian Minister, 260
- Pietrzuch, murdered at Potempa by  
the S.A., 141, 142
- Planck, Herr von, Papen's Secretary  
of State, 131
- Planetta, murderer of Dr. Dollfuss,  
226
- Poland, 121, 183, 231, 261, 265, 267,  
269, 270, 271, 272
- Pope, the, 99, 182, 185
- Potempa, 141-3, 145
- Pravda*, 275, 277
- Propaganda :  
British, 36, 59  
German, 40, 59, 276
- Protestantism, German, 115, 116, 182
- Providence Journal*, New York, 62
- Provincial Governments, German,  
104, 105, 132
- Prussia, 22, 104, 112-14, 123, 132-7,  
159, 176-8, 182, 183
- Prussian Diet, 20, 88, 92, 128, 133, 134

- Rathom, American publisher, 62  
 Reichenau, General von, leader of a  
   German Army Corps, 176, 177  
 'Reichsbanner Schwarz-Weiss-Rot',  
   107, 108, 135  
 Reichstag Elections :  
   14 September 1930 : 110  
   31 July 1932 : 132-7  
   6 November 1932 : 117, 154-6  
   5 March 1933 : 175, 181  
 Reichstag fire, 179, 180  
 Reichstag, German, 95, 96, 106, 108,  
   112, 127, 139, 147-50, 152-5,  
   157, 172, 187  
 Reichswehr, the, 95, 104-9, 112, 156,  
   158, 170, 173, 189, 190, 217, 218,  
   252  
 Remsch, Carl, 57, 58  
 Reparations, 95, 96, 118  
 Reynaud, French Minister of Finance,  
   243  
 R. H. Plan, *see* Hess, Rudolf  
 Rheintaller, Ing., Leader of the  
   Austro-Nazis, 234, 248  
 Rhineland Occupation, 87  
 Ribbentrop, Joachim von, German  
   Foreign Minister, 77, 252, 268,  
   269, 271-3  
 Rieth, Herr von, German Envoy in  
   Vienna, 224-6  
 'Ring, Der', German organisation,  
   85, 88, 90, 93, 98, 99, 104, 125,  
   129  
 Rintelen, Dr. Anton, Austrian Minis-  
   ter, 224  
 Rintelen, Captain von, 45-56, 63, 66,  
   68, 74, 78, 80-2, 224, 276  
 Rintelen, Fräulein von, 74, 75  
 Röhm, Captain Ernst, 108-11, 125,  
   127, 190, 211, 212  
 Rome Protocol, 237, 256  
 Rosenberg, Alfred, Nazi leader, 190,  
   191, 197, 202, 211, 212  
 Rothschild, Baron Louis, 120  
 Rubenach, Eltz von, German Minis-  
   ter, 126, 127, 176  
 Ruhr Occupation, 87, 89  
 Rumania, 274  
 Russell, Lord, 93  
 Russia, 32, 36, 265, 266, 273, 274,  
   281  
 S.A. (*Sturmabteilungen*), 95, 117  
   banned by Brüning, 97, 122, 123  
   as a military power, 107  
   co-operation with the Stahlhelm,  
   108, 110, 113  
 S.A. (*Sturmabteilungen*), (*contd.*) :  
   ban lifted, 127, 128, 131  
   in the streets of Berlin, 131, 136  
   mobilised to march on Berlin, 140,  
   143  
   murder of Pietrzuch, 141, 142  
   indications of breakdown, 152  
   excesses in the streets, 178-80  
   ambush Catholic artisans, 185  
   threatens a new revolution, 188,  
   191  
   assembled on the Austrian border,  
   248, 253  
 Saar, 29, 220, 228, 231, 255, 267, 268  
 Sabotage, 18, 20, 23, 25, 31-5, 39,  
   40-58, 63, 65, 69, 232, 246-50  
 Sarajoglu, Turkish Foreign Minister,  
   272, 273  
 Savigny, Friedrich Karl von, Papen's  
   secretary, 217  
 Schacht, Dr. Hjalmar, President of  
   the Reichsbank, 264  
 Scheele, Dr., German inventor, 47,  
   48, 66  
 Scheffer, von, German Labour Minis-  
   ter, 126  
 Scherlverlag, Berlin, 114  
 Schleicher, Frau Elizabeth von, 24,  
   217  
 Schleicher, General Kurt von, 21, 134  
   as power factor in the Reich, 104,  
   107-9  
   against Brüning, 111, 112, 124  
   brings Papen to power, 125, 150  
   Defence Minister under Papen,  
   125, 126, 139, 159, 167  
   opinion of Papen, 129  
   alliance with the National Social-  
   ists, 130  
   meets Hitler at Fürstenburg, 130,  
   131  
   meets Hitler at manoeuvres, 140  
   breaks with Hitler, 141, 143, 149,  
   156  
   dislodges Papen, 155, 158, 160  
   proposes a cabinet with Strasser  
   and Leipart, 158, 161, 164-6, 171  
   becomes Reichschancellor, 163  
   attempts to save the Reich from  
   Hitler, 164, 171  
   fought by Papen, 166-74  
   putsch plan, 172, 173  
   aspires to be President of the Reich,  
   190  
   shot by the Gestapo, 216-17  
 Schmidt, Dr. Guido, Austrian Foreign  
   Minister, 240, 242, 243, 256, 257



- Schmitz, Richard, Mayor of Vienna, 260
- Schober, Johannes, Austrian Foreign Minister, 119
- Schotte, Dr. Werner, Founder of the 'Herrenklub', 88-90, 159, 172, 188, 215
- Schroeder, German banker, 163, 169
- Schulenburg, Graf von der, German Ambassador in Moscow, 266
- Schulenburg, Papen's assistant in U.S.A., 43, 66
- Schurz, Karl, Papen's assistant in New York, 67
- Schuschnigg, Dr. Kurt von, Austrian Chancellor :  
forms the Government in Austria, 224
- Catholic principles, 233
- negotiations with the Nationalists, 234
- co-operation with Glaise-Horstenaus, 238
- relations with Papen, 240, 256
- betrayed by Seyss-Inquart, 242, 259
- prevents Goering's visit to Austria, 243
- threatened by National opposition, 244
- indignation about the R. H. Plan, 250, 252
- persuaded by Papen to meet Hitler, 256, 257
- meets Hitler at Berchtesgaden, 257, 258
- imprisoned by the Gestapo, 259, 260
- Schwerin-Krosigk, Count, German Minister of Finance, 126, 176
- Scotland Yard, 54
- Seekt, General von, 108
- Seredi, Cardinal, 233
- Severing, Karl, Minister of Interior in Prussia, 112, 122, 132-6
- Seyss-Inquart, Dr. Arthur, Austrian Chancellor, 241, 242
- Siedenburg, Reinhold, 63
- Skal, Georg von, Papen's secretary in New York, 41, 67
- Social Democrats in Germany, 80, 87, 95, 97, 98, 104, 105, 107, 132-7, 145, 153, 155, 158, 164, 165, 181
- Somme Battle, 71
- South America, 24, 74-6, 78
- Soviet-German Agreement, 15, 22, 266, 268, 269, 272, 273, 279, 281
- Soviet Union, 266, 267, 270, 271, 273-5, 279
- Springorum, German industrialist, 167
- Stahlhelm, 107, 115, 133, 176, 180, 181
- Stalin, 265
- Starhemberg, Prince Ernst von, Austrian Vice-Chancellor, 224
- Stegerwald, German Labour Minister, 106, 116, 123
- Stotzinger, Margarethe von, Papen's private secretary, 24, 217
- Strasser, Gregor, Nazi leader, 104, 110, 111, 151-3, 158, 164, 167, 171, 217
- Styria, Nazi putsch in, 227, 232, 235, 247
- Suez Canal, 72
- Sweden, 264
- Switzerland, 245
- Tan, Turkish newspaper, 277
- Tauscher, Captain F. von, Krupp's agent in America, 38, 39, 66, 67
- Tavs, Dr. Leopold, 235, 248
- Tavs Conspiracy, the, 248-50, 257
- Tax-vouchers (*Steuergutscheine*), 150
- Taylor, Bridgeman, 66
- 'Telegraphenunion', 114
- Terentiev, Soviet Ambassador in Ankara, 267-9
- Terror organisations in Austria, 246-50
- Thiépval, 71
- Third Reich, 18, 22, 86, 117, 132, 278
- Thompson, Dorothy, American journalist, 17
- Thyssen, German industrialist, 167
- Torggler, Leader of the German Communists, 134
- Trade Unions, German, 135, 136, 153, 154
- Tschirschky und Boegendorff, Fritz Günther von, Papen's Attaché, 217, 229
- Turkey, 72, 78, 79, 265-9, 271, 272, 275-8
- Türkische Post*, German newspaper in Istanbul, 276, 277
- Turkish Army, 72, 73
- Turkish Front, 76
- 'Ufa', Film Production, 114
- Uhlans Regiment, 27, 28, 68
- Ukraine, 270

- United States of America, 23, 30,  
32-6, 40, 43-6, 62, 77, 80, 92,  
232
- Vanceboro Bridge, 41, 43, 65
- Vatican, the, 220, 228, 233
- Versailles, Treaty of, 85, 121
- Vienna, 224, 225, 227, 229-31, 235,  
240, 247, 250, 252, 256, 261
- Viereck, Georg Sylvester, German  
journalist, 59
- Villard, Oscar Garrison, American  
Ambassador in Berlin, 63
- Villeroy & Boch, pottery manufac-  
turers, 29
- Vimy Ridge, 71, 72
- Vögeler, German industrialist, 167
- Wachenfeld, Haus, Hitler's refuge,  
near Berchtesgaden, 140, 143,  
158, 253, 255-8
- Wall Street, collapse in, 119
- Waltersfangen, Papen's estate in the  
Saar, 29, 231, 263, 264
- War Ministry, Berlin, 31, 32, 35, 39
- Warmbold, Dr. Hermann, German  
Minister of Trade, 126, 161
- Washington, 23, 31, 33, 35, 36, 40,  
74, 75, 78
- Wedel, Herr von, 57, 58, 65
- Weimar Coalition, 87, 94, 97, 99
- Weimar Republic, 15, 85, 90, 106,  
110, 132
- Weiser, Max, Captain, 52
- Western Front, 36, 70-2
- Wheeler, Bennett, American author,  
17
- White Russia, 269, 270
- Wild, Herr von, 31
- Wilson, Woodrow, President of the  
U.S.A., 41, 62
- Wirth, Dr., Reichschancellor, 94
- Wolpert, Captain, 78
- World Economic Crisis, 86, 96, 118-  
121, 151
- World War 1914-18, 15, 16, 25, 32,  
33, 35, 80, 86, 106, 243, 272
- Yeni Sabah*, Turkish newspaper, 269,  
274
- 'Yildirim' Turkish Army Corps,  
72, 73
- Zentrum Party, 35, 92-5, 99, 104,  
107, 112, 115, 123, 128-30, 137,  
154-6, 164, 181
- Zimmermann, German Secretary of  
State, 44, 46



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